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VICTOR HUGO

LES MISERABLES

IV

THE IDYL OF THE RUE PLUMET AND THE EPIC OF THE RUE SAINT-DENIS

VOLUME I

G. Jeanniot inv.

L. Muller sc.

VICTOR HUGO

LES MISÉRABLES

IV

THE IDYL OF THE RUE PLUMET AND THE EPIC OF THE RUE SAINT-DENIS

TRANSLATED BY

M. EDOUARD JOLIVET

VOLUME I

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PART FOUR

THE IDYL OF THE RUE PLUMET AND THE EPIC OF THE RUE SAINT-DENIS

BOOK ONE

SOME PAGES OF HISTORY

I.

WELL CUT OUT

1831 and 1832, the two years that most closely attach themselves to the revolution of July, form one of the most peculiar and most striking moments of history. These two years stand out like two mountains midway between those that precede and those that follow them. They are of revolutionary grandeur. One distinguishes there the precipices. The social masses, the very foundations of civilization, the solid group of superimposed and adherent interests, the secular profiles of the ancient Gallic formation at every moment here appear and there disappear across the stormy clouds of systems, passions and theories. These apparitions and disappearances were called resistance and movement. At intervals, one sees truth, the daylight of the human soul, flash out.

This remarkable epoch is sufficiently circumscribed and is beginning to become so far remote from us, that we are able to grasp, in the present day, its principal outlines.

We will make the attempt.

The Restoration was one of those intermediate phases which are difficult to define, in which are toil, whining, murmurings, sleep, tumult, and which, after all, are nothing else but the arrival of a great nation at a halting-place. These epochs are peculiar, and deceive the politicians who try to speculate upon them. At the outset, the nation only demands repose; there is but one thirst, for peace; there is only one ambition, to be small. That is the translation of behaving quietly. Great events, great perils, great adventures, great men, thank God, we have had enough of them, we are full of them up to the bung. Cæsar would be given for Prusias and Napoleon for the Roi d'Yvetôt. "What a merry little king was there." Folk have been marching from daybreak and arrive at the evening of a long and rough march; they made their first halt with Mirabeau, the second with Robespierre, the third with Napoleon, they are exhausted. Everybody insists on a bed.

Worn-out devotions, obsolete heroisms, gorged ambitions, and made fortunes seek, claim, implore, solicit, what? A resting-place. They have it. They take possession of peace, tranquility, leisure; they are satisfied. Still, at the same time, certain facts

start up, demand recognition and knock at the door of their heart. These facts have emerged from revolutions and wars, they exist, they live, they have the right of installing themselves in society and they induct themselves; and in the majority of instances, facts are the commissaries and the quarter-masters, that only give out billets for principles.

Here then is what discloses itself to political philosophers.

At the same time as wearied men claim rest, accomplished facts demand guarantees. Guarantees for facts are the same thing as repose for men.

It is this that England required of the Stuarts, after the Protector; it is this that France required of the Bourbons after the Empire.

These guarantees are a necessity of the times. They must be granted. The princes "grant" them, but in reality it is the force of circumstances that gives them. This is a profound truth and worth knowing, which the Stuarts did not even surmise in 1660, and of which the Bourbons did not so much as catch a glimpse in 1814.

The predestined family which returned to France when Napoleon collapsed, had the fatal simplicity to believe that it was the family that gave, and that the family could take back

what it had once given ; that the House of Bourbon possessed the divine right, that France possessed nothing ; and that the political right conceded in the charter of Louis XVIII. was nothing else but a branch of the divine right, detached by the House of Bourbon and graciously conceded to the people up to the day when it pleased the king to clutch it again. Still, from the displeasure which the gift caused it, the House of Bourbon should have felt that it did not emanate from it.

It behaved in a grudging way to the nineteenth century. It looked with an ugly smile at every expansion of the nation. To employ a trivial, that is to say, a popular and true phrase, it was crabbed. The people noticed it.

The House of Bourbon believed that it had strength because the empire had been removed before it, like a scene at a theatre. It did not perceive that it had been produced in the same way. It did not see that it was held in the same hand that had removed Napoleon.

It believed that it had roots, because it was the past. It was mistaken ; it formed a portion of the past, but the whole of the past was France. The roots of French society were not in the Bourbons, but in the nation. These obscure and tenacious roots did not constitute any right of a family, but the history of a peo-

ple. They were everywhere, except under the throne.

The House of Bourbon was for France the illustrious and blood-stained knot of her history, but was no longer the principal element of her destiny or the necessary basis of her policy. She could do without the Bourbons; she had done without them for twenty-two years; there was a break of continuity; they did not even suspect it. And how could they suspect it, when they imagined that Louis XVII. reigned at the 9th Thermidor, and that Louis XVIII. was reigning on the day of Marengo? Never, since the beginning of history, have princes been so blind in the presence of facts and of that portion of the divine authority which facts contain and promulgate. Never had the nether claim, which is called the right of kings, denied to such a degree the supreme right.

It was a capital error that led this family to lay their hand again on the guarantees "granted" in 1814, on the concessions, as they entitled them. A lamentable thing! what they styled their concessions, were our conquests; what they called our encroachments, were our rights.

When the hour appeared to have arrived, the Restoration, supposing itself victorious over Bonaparte and rooted in the country,

that is to say, believing itself strong and deeming itself deep-set, suddenly made up its mind and risked its blow. One morning it rose in the face of France, and, raising its voice, it contested the collective title and the individual title, the sovereignty of the nation, the liberty of the citizen. In other terms, it denied to the nation that which made it a nation, and to the citizen that which made him a citizen.

This is the substratum of those famous decrees that are called the Ordonnances of July.

The Restoration fell.

It fell justly. Still, let us add, it was not absolutely hostile to all the forms of progress. Some grand things were accomplished, while it stood aloof.

Under the Restoration the nation had grown accustomed to calm discussion, in which the republic had been deficient, and to grandeur in peace, which was lacking under the empire. France, free and strong, had been an encouraging example for the other peoples of Europe. The Revolution had the right to speak under Robespierre; cannon had the right to speak under Bonaparte; it was under Louis XVIII., and Charles X., the turn arrived for intellect to speak. The wind ceased, the torch was re-illumined. A pure mental light played

round serene heights. It was a magnificent spectacle, useful, and delightful. For fifteen years could be seen at work, in a plenitude of peace, in utmost publicity, those great principles, which are so old for the thinker, so new for the statesman: equality before the law, liberty of conscience, liberty of speech, freedom of the press and the accessibility of all fitting men to office. Things went on thus till 1830. The Bourbons were an instrument of civilization which broke in the hands of Providence.

The fall of the Bourbons was full of grandeur, not on their side, but on the side of the nation. They left the throne with gravity, but without authority; their descent into night was not one of those solemn disappearances which impart a sombre emotion to history; it was neither the spectral calmness of Charles I., nor the eagle cry of Napoleon. They went away, that was all. They laid down the crown and did not retain the glory. They were dignified, but they were not august. They were to a certain extent lacking to the majesty of their misfortune. Charles X., causing a round table to be cut square during the Cherbourg voyage, seemed more anxious about imperiled etiquette than the crumbling monarchy. This diminution saddened the devoted men who loved their persons, and the

serious men who honored their race. The people behaved admirably. The nation, seized one morning by a species of royalist insurrection, felt themselves so strong that they displayed no anger. They defended themselves, restrained themselves, and restored things to their place, placed the government within the law, the Bourbons in exile, alas! and stopped there. They took the old King Charles X. off the daïs which had sheltered Louis XIV. and placed him gently on the ground. They only touched the royal personages cautiously and sorrowfully. It was not one man, it was not several men, it was France, united France, France victorious and intoxicated by its victory, that appeared to remember and put into practice in the eyes of the whole world, the serious remarks of Guillaume du Vair after the day of the barricades:—"It is easy for those who have been accustomed to treat lightly the favors of the great and leap, like a bird hopping from branch to branch, from a low to a flourishing fortune, to show themselves bold against their prince in his adversity; but for my part the fortune of my kings and principally of those who are in affliction will be ever venerable to me."

The Bourbons bore away with them respect but not regret. As we have said, their mis-

fortune was greater than themselves. They faded away on the horizon.

The revolution of July at once found friends and enemies in the whole world. The former rushed toward it with enthusiasm and joy, the latter turned away, each according to their nature. The princes of Europe, the owls of this dawn, at the first moment closed their eyes, which were hurt and stupefied, and only opened them again to menace. It is a terror that we can understand, an anger we can excuse. This strange revolution had hardly amounted to a blow; it had not even done conquered royalty the honor of treating it as an enemy and shedding its blood. In the sight of despotic governments, which are always interested in liberty calumniating itself, the revolution of July had the fault of being formidable yet remaining gentle. Besides, nothing was attempted or prepared against it. The most dissatisfied, the most irritated, the most violent persons saluted it; for, whatever their selfishness or their rancor may be, a mysterious reverence attaches to events in which men are sentient of the co-operation of some one who labors above mankind.

The revolution of July is the triumph of right overthrowing fact. It is a thing full of splendor.

Right overthrowing fact. Hence came the

brilliancy of the revolution of 1830, hence its mansuetude also. Right that triumphs has no need to be violent.

Right is justice and truth.

It is the property of right to remain eternally beautiful and pure. Fact, even the most necessary in appearance, even the best accepted by contemporaries, if it only exist as fact and if it contain too little right or nothing at all of right, is infallibly destined to become, with the stress of time, misshapen, foul, perhaps even monstrous. If we wish to discover at a glance to what a degree of ugliness fact can attain, when looked at through the distance of centuries, let us regard Machiavelli. Machiavelli is not an evil genius, nor a demon, nor a cowardly and servile writer; he is nothing but the fact. And he is not only the Italian fact, but the European fact, the fact of the sixteenth century. He appears hideous, and is so, in the presence of the moral idea of the nineteenth century.

This struggle between right and fact has endured since the origin of societies. To terminate the duel, to amalgamate the pure idea with human reality, to make right penetrate fact and fact penetrate right pacifically is the task of wise men.

II.

BADLY STITCHED

But as one task is the labor of wise men, another task is the labor of clever men.

The revolution of 1830 quickly stopped.

As soon as a revolution has run ashore, the clever men plunder the wreck.

Clever men, in our century, have awarded to themselves the title of statesmen; so effectually that the phrase statesmen has eventually become somewhat a bit of slang. For it must not be forgotten that where there is only cleverness, there littleness necessarily exists. To say "the clever" is much like saying "the mediocrities."

In the same way to speak of "statesmen" is often equivalent to speaking of "traitors."

If we believe clever men then, revolutions like that of July are severed arteries; a prompt ligature is needed. Right, if too loudly proclaimed, begins to give way. Hence so soon as right is substantiated, the state must be strengthened. When liberty is asserted, attention must be directed to power.

At this point wise men, though not yet separated from clever men, begin to mistrust them. Power, so be it. But, in the first place, what is power? secondly, whence does it come?

The clever men do not appear to hear the muttered objection, and they continue their manœuvres.

According to politicians, who ingeniously place a mask of necessity over profitable fiction, the first want of a people after a revolution, if that people form part of a monarchical continent, is to obtain a dynasty. In this way, say they, peace is secured after the revolution, that is to say, time to dress the wounds and repair the house. The dynasty hides the scaffolding and covers the ambulance.

Now, it is not always easy to obtain a dynasty.

Strictly, the first man of genius or even the first adventurer met with is sufficient to make a king. You have in the first case Bonaparte, and in the second Iturbide.

But the first family come across is not sufficient to form a dynasty. There is necessarily a certain amount of antiquity required in a race, and the wrinkle of centuries cannot be improvised.

If we place ourselves at the standpoint of "statesmen," with all due reserves of course,

what are the qualities of a king who issues from a revolution? He may be and it is useful that he should be revolutionary, that is to say, have played a personal part in the revolution, have been in touch with it, have become either compromised or renowned in it, have wielded the axe or drawn the sword.

What are the qualities of a dynasty? it must be national, that is to say, distantly revolutionary, not through acts done, but through ideas accepted. It must be composed of the past and be historical, and composed of the future and be sympathetic.

All this explains why the first revolutions are satisfied with finding a man, Cromwell or Napoleon; and why the second are fixedly resolved to find a family, the House of Brunswick or the House of Orléans.

Royal houses resemble those Indian fig-trees of which each branch, bent down to the earth, there takes root and becomes a fig-tree. Each branch of the family may become a dynasty. The sole condition is that it bends down to the people.

Such is the theory of clever men.

This then is the great art: to give to a success the sound of a catastrophe, so that those who profit by it may also tremble at it, to season each step taken with fear, to increase the curve of the transition until progress is

checked, to depreciate the coming dawn, denounce and cut off the eagerness of enthusiasm, to trim the angles and the claws, to wrap the triumph in wadding, to muffle up the right, to roll the giant people in flannel and put them to bed at full speed, to place this excess of health under medical treatment, to put Hercules under treatment as a convalescent, to water-down events in expediency, to offer to minds thirsting for the ideal this diluted nectar, to take precautions against extreme success, to provide the revolution with a sky-light.

1830 practised this theory, which had already been applied to England by 1688.

1830 is a revolution arrested mid-way. A moiety of progress: that is a quasi-right. Now logic ignores the very nearly; as absolutely as the sun ignores a candle.

Who check revolutions mid-way? The bourgeoisie.

Why?

Because the bourgeoisie represent satisfied self-interest. Yesterday there was appetite, to-day there is fulness, to-morrow there will be satiety.

The phenomenon of 1814, after Napoleon, recurred in 1830, after Charles X.

Attempts have been made, wrongfully, to convert the bourgeoisie into a class. The

bourgeoisie is merely the contented portion of the people. The bourgeois is a man who at last has time to sit down. A chair is not a caste.

But through a desire to sit down too soon, the progress of the human race may be arrested. This has frequently been the fault of the bourgeoisie.

People are not a class because they commit a fault. Selfishness is not one of the divisions of the social order.

Besides, as we must be just even towards selfishness, the condition for which that portion of the nation which is styled the bourgeoisie aspired after the shock of 1830, was not inertia, which is complicated with indifference and sloth, and contains a little shame, nor was it sleep, which presupposes a momentary oblivion accessible to dreams; it was a halt.

Halt is a word comprising a double meaning, singular, and almost contradictory: it is a troop on the march, that is to say, movement; it is a bivouac, that is to say, repose.

A halt is the restoration of strength; it is repose armed and awake; it is the accomplished fact, posting its sentries and standing on guard. A halt presupposes a combat yesterday and a combat to-morrow.

It is the interlude between 1830 and 1848.

What we here call combat may also be called progress.

Hence the bourgeoisie as well as the statesmen required a man who expressed this word: "halt." An "although-because." A composite individuality signifying revolution and signifying stability, in other words, strengthening the present by the evident compatibility of the past with the future.

This man was "found ready made." His name was Louis-Philippe d'Orléans.

The 221 made Louis-Philippe king. Lafayette undertook the coronation. He named him *the best of Republics*. The Town Hall of Paris was substituted for the Cathedral of Reims.

This substitution of a half-throne for the throne was "the work of 1830."

When the clever men had completed their task, the immense fault of their solution was apparent. All this had been done beyond the pale of absolute right. Absolute right shouted "I protest!" and then, formidable thing, it fell back into darkness.

III.

LOUIS-PHILIPPE

Revolutions have a terrible arm and a lucky hand; they hit hard and choose well. Even when incomplete, even when bastardized, and reduced to the state of a younger revolution, like the revolution of 1830, they nearly always retain sufficient providential light not to fall badly. Their eclipse is never an abdication.

Still we must not boast too loudly, for, ere now, revolutions themselves have been mistaken, and grave blunders have been witnessed.

Let us return to 1830. 1830, in its deviation, was fortunate. In the establishment which was called order, after the revolution was cut short, the king was worth more than the royalty. Louis-Philippe was a rare man.

Son of a father, to whom history will certainly accord extenuating circumstances, but as truly worthy of esteem as his father was worthy of blame; possessing all the private virtues and several of the public virtues; care-

ful of his health, of his fortune, of his person, of his business affairs; knowing the value of a minute but not always the value of a year; sober, serious, peaceful, patient; a good man and a good prince; sleeping with his wife, and having in his palace lacqueys whose business it was to show the conjugal couch to the bourgeois (an ostentation of regularity which had grown useful after the old illegitimate displays of the elder branch); acquainted with all the languages of Europe, and, what is rarer still, with all the languages of all the interests, and speaking them; an admirable representative of "the middle classes," but surpassing them, and in every way greater than they; possessing the excellent sense, while appreciating to the full the blood from which he sprang, of claiming merit for his intrinsic value, and very particular on the question of his race, declaring himself an Orléans and not a Bourbon; a thorough first prince of the blood, so long as he had only been most serene highness, but a frank bourgeois from the day when he became his majesty; diffuse in public, concise in private life; branded, but not proved to be, a miser; in reality, one of those saving men who are easily prodigal for a caprice or for a duty; well read, and caring but little for literature; a gentleman, but not a cavalier; simple, calm, and strong; adored

by his family and his household; a seductive speaker, a disabused statesman, inwardly cold, swayed by the immediate interest, governing always on the spur of the moment, incapable of rancor and of gratitude, pitilessly pitting superiorities against mediocrities, and clever in confounding by parliamentary majorities those mysterious unanimities which growl hoarsely beneath thrones; expansive, at times imprudent in his expansiveness, but displaying a marvellous address in his imprudence; fertile in expedients, in faces, in masks; terrifying France by Europe and Europe by France; undeniably loving his country, but preferring his family; valuing domination more than authority and authority more than dignity, a temperament which has this mournful feature about it, that, by twisting everything to success, it admits craft and does not absolutely repudiate baseness, but at the same time has this advantage that it preserves policy from violent shocks, the state from fractures and society from catastrophes; minute, correct, vigilant, attentive, sagacious, indefatigable, sometimes contradicting himself, and belying himself; bold against Austria at Ancona, obstinate against England in Spain, bombarding Antwerp and paying Pritchard; singing the Marseillaise with conviction; inaccessible to despondency, to fatigue, to a taste for the

beautiful and the ideal, to rash generosities, to a Utopia, to a chimera, to anger, to vanity, to fear; possessing every form of personal intrepidity; a general at Valmy, a private at Jemappes; eight times attacked by regicides, and always smiling; brave, as a grenadier, courageous, as a thinker; anxious only when facing the chances of a European embroilment, and unfitted for great political adventures; always ready to risk his life, never his work; disguising his will under cover of influence to the end of being obeyed rather as an intellect than as a king; gifted with observation and not with divination; little attentive to minds, but a judge of men, that is to say, needing to see to enable him to judge; endowed with prompt and penetrating good sense, practical wisdom, fluent tongue, a prodigious memory; incessantly drawing on that memory, his sole point of resemblance with Cæsar, Alexander and Napoleon; knowing facts, details, dates, proper names, but ignorant of the tendencies, the passions, the various tempers of the mob, the internal aspirations, the concealed and obscure agitations of minds, in a word, of all that may be called the invisible currents of consciences; accepted by the surface, but little in accord with the lower strata of France; saving himself by finesse; governing too much and not reigning enough; his own prime

minister; excellent in creating from the littleness of realities an obstacle to the immensity of ideas; mingling with a true creative faculty of civilization, order, and organization, one knows not, what spirit of routine and of chicanery; the founder and proxy of a dynasty; having in him something of Charlemagne and something of an attorney; in sum, as a lofty and original figure, a prince who managed to acquire power despite the inquietude of France, and influence despite the jealousy of Europe, Louis-Philippe would be classed among the eminent men of his age, and would be ranked among the most illustrious rulers known in history, if he had loved glory a little and had had a feeling for what is grand to the same degree as he had a feeling for what is useful.

Louis-Philippe had been handsome, and, when aged, remained graceful; not always admired by the nation, he was always admired by the mob; he pleased. He had this gift, he could charm. He was deficient in majesty; he neither wore a crown, though king, nor white hair, though an old man. His manners belonged to the ancient régime, and his habits to the new, a mixture of the noble and the bourgeois which suited 1830; Louis-Philippe was transition on a throne; he retained the old pronunciation and the old orthography, which he placed at the service of modern

opinions; he loved Poland and Hungary, but he wrote *les Polonois*, and spoke of *les Hongrais*. He wore the uniform of the National Guard like Charles X., and the ribbon of the Legion of Honor like Napoleon.

He went rarely to chapel, not at all to the chase, never to the opera. He was incorruptible by priests, whippers-in, and ballet girls; this formed part of his bourgeoise popularity. He had no court. He went out with an umbrella under his arm, and this umbrella for a long time formed part of his nimbus. He was a bit of a mason, a bit of a gardener and a bit of a surgeon: he bled a postilion who fell from his horse; Louis-Philippe no more thought of going out without his lancet than Henri III. without his dagger. The royalists laughed at this ridiculous king, as the first who shed blood in order to heal.

From the complaints which history makes against Louis-Philippe there is a deduction to be made; there are those which accuse the royalty, those which accuse the reign, and those which accuse the king; three columns each of which gives a different total. Democratic right confiscated, progress reduced to the second interest, the protests of the streets violently repressed, the military execution of insurrections, riots suppressed by arms, the Rue Transnonain, the councils of war, the

absorption of the real country in the legal country, the government on joint account with three hundred thousand privileged persons, these are the deeds of royalty; Belgium refused, Algeria too harshly conquered, and like India by the English, conquered with more of barbarity than civilization, the breach of faith to Abd-el-Kader, Blaye, Deutz bought, Pritchard paid, these are the deeds of the reign; while the policy which cared more for the family than the nation is the deed of the king.

As we see, when the deductions have been made, the charge against the king is abated.

His great fault was this: he was modest in the name of France.

Whence comes this fault?

Let us tell.

Louis-Philippe was a king who was too much a father; this incubation of a family which is intended to hatch a dynasty is frightened at everything and does not like to be disturbed; hence arises excessive timidity, which is offensive to a people which has July 14th in its civil traditions and Austerlitz in its military traditions. Besides, if we abstract public duties, which should ever be first fulfilled, the family merited this profound tenderness of Louis-Philippe for his family. This domestic group was admirable. Their virtues elbowed their talents. One of the

daughters of Louis-Philippe, Marie d'Orléans, placed the name of her race among artists as Charles d'Orléans had done among the poets. She created from her soul a statue which she called Joan of Arc. Two of the sons of Louis-Philippe drew from Metternich this demagogic eulogy: *They are young men whose like can scarcely be found, and such princes as were never seen before.*

Here, without any dissimulation, but also without any extenuation, is the truth about Louis-Philippe.

To be the Prince Egalité, to bear within him the contradiction between the Restoration and the Revolution, to possess that alarming phase in the Revolution which becomes reassuring in the governor, was the fortune of Louis-Philippe in 1830; never was there a more complete adaptation of the man to the event; for one entered into the other, and the incarnation took place. Louis-Philippe is 1830 formed into a man. Moreover he had on his side that great designation to a throne, exile. He had been an outlaw, wandering, poor. He had lived by his own labor. In Switzerland, this heir to the richest princely domains of France was obliged to sell a horse in order to eat. At Reichenau, he had given lessons in mathematics while his sister Adelaide was em-

broidering and sewing. These souvenirs blended with a king rendered the bourgeoisie enthusiastic. With his own hands he had demolished the last iron cage at Mont Saint-Michel, erected by Louis XI., and employed by Louis XV. He was the companion of Dumouriez, he was the friend of Lafayette; he had belonged to the Jacobin Club; Mirabeau had tapped him on the shoulder; and Danton had addressed him as: "Young man!" At the age of twenty-four, in '93, when M. de Chartres, he, from an obscure gallery in the Convention, had assisted at the trial of Louis XVI., so well named *that poor tyrant.* The blind clairvoyance of the Revolution, destroying royalty in the king and the king with royalty, without hardly noticing the man in the fierce destruction of the idea, the vast tempest of the Convention Tribune, the public wrath putting questions, Capet not knowing what to answer, the frightful stupefied vacillation of this royal head before the threatening whisper, the relative innocence of all mixed up in this catastrophe, of those who condemned as well as of him who was condemned—these things he, Louis-Philippe, had looked at, he had contemplated these frenzies; he had seen centuries appear at the bar of the Convention; he had seen, behind that unfortunate and responsible victim, Louis

XVI., rise up in the darkness the formidable party accused, the monarchy ; and he retained in his soul a respectful terror of this immense justice of the people which is almost as impersonal as the justice of God.

The traces which the Revolution left upon him were prodigious. His memory was like a living imprint of these great years minute by minute. One day, in the presence of a witness, whom it is impossible for us to doubt, he corrected from memory the entire letter A in the alphabetical list of the Constituent Assembly.

Louis-Philippe was an open-air king. During his reign the press was free, the tribune was free, conscience and speech were free. The Laws of September had a clear track. Though he well knew the corrosive power of light upon privileges, he left his throne exposed to the light. History will give him credit for this fidelity.

Louis-Philippe, like all historic men who have quitted the stage, is at the present day put on trial by the human conscience. This trial has not yet gone through its first stage.

The hour when history speaks with its venerable and free accent has not yet arrived for him ; the moment has not yet come to pronounce upon this king the final judgment ;

the stern and illustrious historian Louis Blanc himself has recently toned down his first verdict; Louis-Philippe was elected by the two hundred and twenty-one deputies in 1830, that is to say, by a semi-parliament and by a semi-revolution; and, in any case, we cannot here judge him philosophically, as has been partially seen above, without making some reservations in the name of the absolute democratic principle; in the sight of the absolute, everything is usurpation that derogates from those two rights, the right of the man first, and the right of the people secondly; but what we are able to say at present, these reservations being made, is that, as a whole, and in whatever way we may regard him, Louis-Philippe, taken by himself, and looked at from the stand-point of human goodness, will remain, to employ the old language of ancient history, one of the best princes that ever sat on a throne.

What has he against him? This throne. Take away from Louis-Philippe the king, there remains the man. And the man is good. He is at times so good as to be admirable. Often in the midst of the gravest cares, after a day's struggle against the whole diplomacy of the Continent, he returned to his apartment in the evening and there, exhausted by fatigue, oppressed by want of sleep, what did he do?

he would take up a file of papers, and spend the night in examining a criminal process, considering that it was something to hold his own against Europe, but that it was a greater thing still to snatch a culprit from the executioner. He obstinately resisted his keeper of the seals; he disputed the scaffold foot to foot with his attorney-generals, *those chatterers of the law*, as he called them. Sometimes piles of sentences covered his table; he examined them all; it was a pang for him to abandon these miserable condemned heads. One day he said to the same witness we just now quoted: *This night, I have gained seven of them.* During the earlier years of his reign, the penalty of death was as it were abolished, and the re-erection of the scaffold was a violence done to the king. The Grève having disappeared with the elder branch, a bourgeois Grève was established under the name of the Barrière Saint-Jacques; "practical men" felt the necessity of a quasi-legitimate guillotine; and this was one of the victories of Casimir Perier, who represented the narrow side of the bourgeoisie, over Louis-Philippe, who represented the liberal side. Louis-Philippe annotated Beccaria with his own hand. After the Fieschi machine he exclaimed: *What a pity that I was not wounded! for then I could have shown mercy.* Another time, alluding

to the resistance offered by his ministers, he wrote with reference to a political culprit who is one of the most noble men of our time: *His pardon is granted, all that I have to do now is to obtain it.* Louis-Philippe was as gentle as Louis IX., and as good as Henri IV.

Now, in our opinion, in history, where goodness is a rare pearl, the man who was good is superior to one who was grand.

Louis-Philippe having been sternly appraised by some, harshly perhaps by others, it is very simple that a man, himself a phantom to-day, who knew that king, should offer testimony on his behalf in the presence of history; this testimony, whatever its value may be, is evidently and before all things disinterested; an epitaph written by a dead man is sincere; one shadow may console another shadow; sharing the same darkness gives the right to praise; and there is little fear that it will ever be said of two tombs in exile: This man flattered the other.

IV.

CRACKS IN THE FOUNDATION

At the moment when the drama we are recounting is about to penetrate the thickness of one of those tragic clouds which cover the beginning of the reign of Louis-Philippe, there should be no ambiguity, and it was necessary that this book should give an explanation about that king.

Louis-Philippe had entered upon the royal authority without violence, without direct action on his part, owing to a revolutionary change of wind, which was evidently very distinct from the real object of the Revolution, but in which he, the Duc d'Orléans, had no personal initiative. He was born a prince, and believed himself elected king. He had not given himself these functions; he had not taken them; they were offered to him and he accepted them; convinced, wrongly indeed, but convinced, that the offer was in accordance with right and that the acceptance was in accordance with duty. Thence, his was a

possession in good faith. Now we say in all conscience, that as Louis-Philippe was honest in his possession, and the democracy was honest in its attack, the quantity of terror which disengaged itself from social struggles cannot be charged either to the king or to the democracy. A collision of principles resembles a collision of the elements. The ocean defends the water, the hurricane defends the air; the king defends the royalty, the democracy defends the people; the relative, which is the monarchy, resists the absolute, which is the republic; society bleeds from this conflict, but what is its suffering to-day will later be its salvation; and, in any case, those who struggle must not be blamed; one of the two parties, evidently, must be mistaken; right does not stand, like the Colossus of Rhodes, on two shores at once, one foot in the republic, one foot in royalty; it is indivisible, and wholly on one side; but those who are mistaken are mistaken sincerely; a blind man is no more a culprit than a Vendean is a brigand. We must impute then to the fatality of things these formidable collisions. Whatever these tempests may be, human irresponsibility is mixed up with them.

Let us complete this statement.

The government of 1830 had a hard life of it from the beginning. Born yesterday it was obliged to combat to-day.

Scarce installed, it felt everywhere the vague movements of pulling down beneath the foundation of July, which had been laid so recently, and was so wanting in solidity.

Resistance sprang up on the morrow; it might perhaps have been born the day before.

From month to month the hostility increased, and instead of being dull became patent.

The Revolution of July, hardly accepted by kings out of France, was, as we have said, diversely interpreted in France.

God imparts to men His will visible in events, an obscure text written in a mysterious language. Men at once make translations of it; translations hasty, incorrect, full of errors, gaps, and misunderstandings. Very few minds comprehend the divine language. The more sagacious, the calmer, the more profound, decipher slowly, and, when they arrive with their version, the work has been done long before; there are already twenty translations offered for sale. From each translation is born a party, and from each misunderstanding a faction; and each party believes that it has the only true text, and each faction believes that it possesses the light.

Frequently power itself is a faction.

There are in revolutions men who swim against the current; they are the old parties.

For the old parties that cling to heredity by the grace of God the revolutions which issue from the right to revolt, fancy that they have a right to revolt against them. This is an error. In revolutions the rebel is not the people, it is the king. Revolution is precisely the contrary of revolt. Every revolution, being a normal accomplishment, contains in itself its legitimacy, which false revolutionists sometimes dishonor, but which endures even when sullied, which survives, even when bleeding. Revolutions issue, not from an accident, but from a necessity. A revolution is a return from the factitious to the real. It takes place because it must take place.

The old legitimist parties did not the less assail the revolution of 1830 with all the violences which spring from false reasoning. Errors are excellent projectiles. They skilfully struck it at the spot where it was vulnerable, in the flaw of its cuirass, in its want of logic; they attacked this revolution in its royalty. They cried to it: "Revolution, why this king?" Factions are blind men who aim exactly.

This cry the republicans also raised. But coming from them, this cry was logical. What was blundering in the legitimists was clear-sightedness in the democrats. 1830 had brought bankruptcy to the people. The in-

dignant democracy reproached it with the deed.

The establishment of July struggled between the attack made by the past and the attack made by the future. It represented the minute, contending on one side with the monarchical ages, on the other with eternal right.

And besides, again, 1830, no longer a revolution and becoming a monarchy, was obliged to take the precedence of Europe. To maintain peace increased the complication. A harmony desired against the grain is often more onerous than a war. From this sullen conflict, always muzzled but always growling, emerged armed peace, that ruinous expedient of civilization suspecting itself. The royalty of July was refractory, notwithstanding her share in them, in the team of European cabinets. Metternich would willingly have put a kicking-strap upon it. Impelled by progress in France, it impelled the slowly-moving monarchies in Europe. Towed, it towed too.

In the meantime, at home, pauperism, beggary, wages, education, the penal code, prostitution, the fall of woman, wealth, misery, production, consumption, assessment, exchange, money, credit, the rights of capital, the rights of labor,—all these questions were multiplied above society; a terrible precipice.

Outside of political parties, properly so

called, another movement manifested itself. To a democratic fermentation responded a philosophic fermentation. The élite felt troubled like the mob; differently, but as much.

Thinking men meditated, while the soil, that is to say the people, traversed by the revolutionary currents, trembled beneath them with, I know not what, vague epileptic shocks. These dreamers, some isolated, others assembled in families and almost in communities, stirred up social questions, peacefully, but deeply; they were impassive miners, who quietly hollowed their galleries in the depths of a volcano, scarcely disturbed by the dull commotions and by the furnaces of which they caught a glimpse.

This tranquility was not the least beautiful spectacle of this agitated epoch.

These men left to political parties the question of rights, they occupied themselves about the question of happiness.

The welfare of man was what they wished to extract from society.

They elevated material questions, questions about agriculture, about trade, about commerce, almost to the dignity of a religion. In civilization, such as it has been constituted, a little by God, a great deal by man, interests are combined, aggregated, and amalgamated

in such a manner as to form a real hard rock, by virtue of a law of dynamics carefully studied by the economists, those geologists of politics.

These men, who grouped themselves under different appellations, but who may all be designated by the generic title of socialists, tried to pierce this rock and to cause the living waters of human felicity to gush forth.

From the question of the scaffold to the question of war, their labors embraced everything. To the rights of man, proclaimed by the French revolution, they added the rights of the woman and the rights of the child.

It is not remarkable, that for various reasons, we are unable thoroughly to argue out here from the theoretical point of view, the questions raised by socialism. We limit ourselves to an indication of them.

All the questions which the socialists proposed, laying aside cosmogonic visions, reverie, and mysticism, may be carried back to two principal problems.

Problem the first :

To produce wealth.

Problem the second :

To distribute it.

The first problem contains the question of labor.

The second contains the question of wages.

In the first problem the point is the employment of force.

In the second the distribution of enjoyments.

From a good employment of force results public power.

From a good distribution of enjoyments results individual happiness.

By good distribution is meant, not equal distribution, but equitable distribution. The first equality is equity.

From these two things combined, public power abroad, individual happiness at home, result social prosperity.

Social prosperity is, as much as to say, man happy, the citizen free, the nation great.

England solves the first of these two problems. She creates wealth admirably; she distributes it badly. This solution, which is completely one-sided, fatally leads her to these two extremes: monstrous opulence, monstrous misery. All the enjoyments belong to the few, all the privations to the rest, that is to say, to the people; privileges, exceptions, monopoly, feudalism, are born from labor itself. That is a false and dangerous situation which bases public power upon private want, which roots the grandeur of the state in the sufferings of the individual. It is a badly-composed grandeur, in which all the material elements

are combined, and into which no moral element enters.

Communism and the agrarian law fancy that they solve the second problem. They are mistaken. Their distribution kills production. The equal division abolishes emulation. And consequently labor. It is a distribution made by the butcher, who slaughters what he divides. It is impossible then to be satisfied with these pretended solutions. To kill riches is not to distribute them.

The two problems must be solved together in order to be properly solved. The two solutions must be combined, and not be treated as one.

If you solve but the first of these two problems you will be Venice, you will be England. You will have, like Venice, an artificial power, or, like England, a material power; you will be the wicked rich man. You will perish by violence, as Venice is dead, or by bankruptcy, as England will fall. And the world will leave you to die and fall, because the world allows everything to die and fall which is solely selfishness, all that which does not represent to the human race a virtue or an idea.

It must be well understood here that by these words, Venice, England, we do not mean the peoples, but the social constructions, the oligarchies superposed upon the nations, and

not the nations themselves. The nations always have our respect and our sympathy. Venice, as a people, will live again; England, as an aristocracy, will fall, but England the nation is immortal. This said, let us continue.

Solve the two problems, encourage the rich and protect the poor, suppress the misery, put an end to the unjust exhaustion of the weak by the strong, put a curb upon the iniquitous jealousy which the man still on the road feels for him who has reached the journey's end, adjust mathematically and fraternally the wage to the labor, blend gratuitous and enforced education with the growth of childhood, and render science the basis of manhood, develop intelligence while occupying the arms, be at once a powerful people and a family of happy men, democratize the property, not by abolishing, but by universalizing it, in such a manner that every citizen without exception may be a land-owner, an easier task than may be believed, in two words, know how to produce wealth and know how to distribute it; and you will possess at once material greatness and moral greatness; and you will be worthy to call yourself France.

Behold, beside and beyond a few sects that have gone astray, this is what socialism said; behold, this is what it sought in facts, behold, this is what it sketched out in minds.

Admirable efforts! sacred attempts.

These doctrines, these theories, these resistances, the unexpected necessity for the statesman to settle accounts with the philosophers, glimpses caught of confused evidences, a new policy to create, in accord with the old world, without too much dis-accord with the revolutionary ideal, a situation in which Lafayette must be used to defend Polignac, the intuition of progress apparent behind the riots, the chambers and the street, rivalries to be balanced around the king, his faith in the Revolution, perhaps, we know not, what eventual resignation sprung from the vague acceptance of a definite superior right, his wish to abide by his race, his family affection, his sincere respect for the people, his thorough honesty preoccupied Louis-Philippe almost painfully and at times, strong and courageous as he was, crushed him beneath the difficulty of being a king.

He felt beneath his feet a formidable disintegration, which was not however a crumbling to dust, France was more France than ever.

Dark storm-clouds covered the horizon. A strange gradually-increasing shadow was stretched little by little over men, over things, over ideas; a shadow that sprang from anger and from systems. Everything that had been

hastily suppressed stirred and fermented. At times the conscience of the honest man held its breath, as there was an uneasy feeling produced by this atmosphere, in which sophisms were mixed with truths. Minds trembled in the social anxiety, like leaves at the approach of a storm. The electric tension was such that at certain moments the first comer, a stranger, would produce a flash. Then the twilight obscurity fell over the scene again. At intervals, deep and muttered rollings allowed an opinion to be formed of the size of the thunderbolt that was in the cloud.

Twenty months had scarce elapsed since the revolution of July, when the year 1832 opened with an aspect of imminence and distress. The distress of the people, workmen without bread, the last Prince of Condé departed from the world, Brussels expelling the Nassaus as Paris had expelled the Bourbons, Belgium offering itself to a French prince and given to an English prince, the Russian hatred of Nicolas, behind us two demons of the south, Ferdinand in Spain, Miguel in Portugal, the earth trembling in Italy, Metternich stretching out his hand over Bologna, France precipitating itself upon Austria at Anconda, in the north we know not what sinister sound of a hammer nailing Poland again in its coffin, throughout all Europe angry eyes watching France, England

a suspicious ally, prepared to thrust any one who bent and to throw herself on him who fell, the peerage taking refuge behind Beccaria to refuse four heads to the law, the fleurs-de-lys erased from the king's coach, the cross dragged from Notre Dame, Lafayette enfeebled, Laffitte ruined, Benjamin Constant dead in indigence, Casimir Perier dead in the exhaustion of power; a political disease and a social disease declaring themselves at once in the two capitals of the kingdom, the one the city of thought, the other the city of labor; in Paris a civil war, in Lyons a servile war; in these two cities the same glare of a furnace; a volcanic purple on the brow of the people; the south fanaticized, the west troubled, the Duchesse de Berry in the Vendée, plots, conspiracies, insurrections, the cholera, added to the gloomy rumor of ideas the gloomy tumult of events.

V

FACTS FROM WHICH HISTORY PROCEEDS AND WHICH HISTORY IGNORES

Toward the end of April everything became aggravated. The fermentation grew to an ebullition. Since 1830 there had been here and there small partial revolts, quickly suppressed, but breaking out again, the sign of a vast subjacent conflagration. Something terrible was brooding. A glimpse could be caught of the lineaments, still indistinct and badly lighted, of a possible revolution. France was looking at Paris; Paris was looking at the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

The Faubourg Saint-Antoine, sullenly heated, had entered upon ebullition.

The wine-shops in the Rue de Charonne were, though the conjunction of these two epithets appears singular when applied to wine-shops, grave and stormy.

The government at home was purely and simply put upon its trial. Men publicly discussed *whether they should fight or remain quiet.* There were back-rooms where work-

men took an oath that they would go into the streets at the first cry of alarm, and "that they would fight without taking count of the number of their enemies." Once when the pledge had been taken, a man seated in a corner of the wine-shop "raised a sonorous voice" and said: *You understand! You have sworn!* Sometimes they went up to a private room on the first floor, and there scenes almost masonic took place. Some administered oaths to the novice *to render a service to himself as well as to the fathers of families.* Such was the formula.

In the tap-rooms, "subversive" pamphlets were read. *They abused the government,* says a secret report of the day.

Remarks like the following could be heard: —*I do not know the names of the chiefs. We shall not know the day till two hours beforehand.*—A workman said:—*We are three hundred, let us each subscribe ten sous, there will be one hundred and fifty francs with which to manufacture bullets and powder.* Another said:—*I do not ask for six months, I do not ask for two. Before fifteen days we shall be in parallel with the government. With twenty-five thousand men we can place ourselves in front.*—Another said:—*I do not go to bed because I make cartridges at night.*—From time to time men "in bourgeois and in handsome

clothes" came, "pretending to be embarrassed," and having the air "of command," gave a grasp of the hand *to the more important*, and went away. They never stayed more than ten minutes. They exchanged in a whisper the significant remarks:—*The plot is ripe, the thing is ready.*—To borrow the exact expression of one of the by-standers "this was buzzed by all those who were there." The excitement was such that one day, in a crowded wine-shop, a workman shouted out:—*But we have no arms!*—One of his comrades replied:—*The soldiers have them!*—thus parodying, without suspecting it, the proclamation of Bonaparte to the army of Italy.—"When they had any very great secret, adds a report, they did not communicate it." We can scarcely comprehend what they could conceal after what they had said.

The meetings were sometimes periodical. At certain ones, there were never more than eight or ten, and they were always the same persons. At others any one who liked went in, and the room was so crowded that they were compelled to stand. Some found themselves there through enthusiasm and passion: others because *that was their road to their work.* In the same way as during the Revolution, there were female patriots in these wine-shops, who kissed the new-comers.

Other expressive facts happened daily.

A man went into a wine-shop, drank, and went away, saying: —*Wine-dealer, what is due, the Revolution will pay.*

Revolutionary agents were nominated at the house of a wine-dealer facing the Rue de Charonne. The ballot was cast in caps.

Workmen assembled at the house of a fencing-master who gave lessons in the Rue de Cotte. He had there a trophy of arms made of wooden sabres, of canes, of cudgels, and of foils. One day the buttons were broken off from the foils. A workman said: —*We are twenty-five, but they do not reckon upon me, because they regard me as a machine.* This machine was at a later date Quénisset.

Some things that were premeditated assumed little by little a strange notoriety. A woman who was sweeping her door said to another woman: —*For a long time past they have worked hard making cartridges.* In the open streets proclamations addressed to the National Guards of the departments were read aloud. One of these proclamations was signed: —*Burtot, wine-dealer.*

One day, at the door of a cordial-dealer in the Marché Lenoir, a man with a large beard and an Italian accent leaped on a post, and began to read with a loud voice a singular document which seemed to emanate from some

occult power. Groups were formed around him and applauded. The passages which most excited the mob were recollected and noted down. ". . . Our doctrines are impeded, our proclamations are torn down, our bill-stickers are watched and cast into prison. . . ." —"The collapse in our cottons has converted many of the moderate-party."—". . . The future of the people is being worked out in our obscure ranks."—". . . These are the terms laid down: action or reaction, revolution or counter-revolution. For in our age no one any more believes in inertia, nor in immobility. For the people, or against the people, that is the question. There is no other."—". . . On the day when we no longer please you, break us, but till then aid us to progress." All this took place in broad daylight.

Other facts, more audacious still, appeared suspicious to the people, by reason of their very audacity. On April 4, 1832, a passer-by leaped on a post at the corner of the Rue Sainte-Marguerite, and cried:—*I am a Babouviste!*—But under Babeuf the people scented Gisquet.

Among other things this passer-by said:

"Down with property! The opposition of the Left is cowardly and treacherous. When it wishes to have satisfaction it preaches

the Revolution. It is democratic that it may not be defeated, and royalist that it need not fight. The republicans are feathered beasts. Distrust the republicans, citizen-workmen!"

"Silence, citizen-spy!" cried a working-man.

This cry put an end to the speech.

Mysterious events occurred.

At nightfall a working-man met near the canal "a well-dressed man," who said to him: —"Where art thou going, citizen?" "Sir," answered the working-man, "I have not the honor of knowing you."—"I know thee right well." And the man added: "Fear nothing. I am the agent of the committee. It is suspected that thou art not to be thoroughly trusted. Thou knowest that if thou darest to reveal anything, there is an eye upon thee." Then he shook the working-man's hand and went away saying: "We shall meet again soon."

The police who were listening, overheard, not only in the wine-shops but in the streets, singular dialogues:

"Get yourself ready very quickly," said a weaver to a cabinet-maker.

"Wherefore?"

"There will be shots to fire."

Two passers-by in rags exchanged these

remarkable replies, big with an apparent Jacquerie:

"Who governs us?"

"It is Monsieur Philippe."

"No, it is the bourgeoisie."

It would be an error if it were believed that we take the word Jacquerie in bad part. The Jacques were the poor.

Another time some one happened to pass two men of whom the one said to the other:—"We have a famous plan of attack."

Of a private conversation between four men squatting in a ditch, near the Round-Point of the Barrière du Trône, only what follows was picked up:

"Everything possible will be done to prevent him walking about Paris any longer."

"Who is the *he?*" It is a menacing obscurity.

"The principal chiefs," as they were called in the faubourg, kept aloof. It was believed that they assembled, to concert matters, at a wine-shop near the Pointe Saint-Eustache. A man named Aug. ——, chief of the society for the relief of tailors, Rue Mondétour, was supposed to act as central intermediary between the chiefs and the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Nevertheless, there was always a considerable amount of obscurity about these chiefs, and no ascertained fact could weaken

the singular pride of that answer made at a later date, by a prisoner before the Court of Peers.

"Who was your chief?"

"*I did not know any, and I did not acknowledge any.*"

They were as yet scarcely anything beyond words, transparent but vague: at times mere rumors, reports, hear-says. Other signs arrived unexpectedly.

A carpenter engaged in the Rue de Reuilly in nailing up the planks of a palisade round a block of ground on which a house was being built, found on the ground a fragment of a torn letter, on which the following lines were still legible:

". . . The committee must take measures to prevent recruiting in the sections for the different societies. . . ."

And as a postscript:

"We have learned that there are guns at number 5 (bis), Rue du Faubourg-Poissonnière, to the number of five or six thousand, at the house of a gunmaker, in a yard. The Section possesses no arms."

What startled the carpenter, and induced him to show the thing to his neighbors, was that a few paces further on he found another paper, equally torn and even more significant, of which we reproduce the shape, on account

of the historical interest of these strange documents:

Q	C	D	E	*Apprenez cette liste par cœur. Après, vous la déchirerez. Les hommes admis en feront autant lorsque vous leur aurez transmis des ordres.* *Salut et Fraternité* *u. og. a*[1]*. fe.* L

Get this list by heart. Afterwards, destroy it. The men admitted will hold themselves subject to your orders.

Health and Fraternity.

u. og. a[1]*. fe.* L.

The persons who were at that time let into the secret of this discovery did not learn till a later date the hidden meaning of the four capitals: *quinturions*, *centurions*, *décurions*, *éclaireurs*, and the sense of the letters: *u. og. a*[1]*. fe.* which were a date, and indicated *this 15th April, 1832*. Under each capital were written names followed by very characteristic indications. Thus:—Q. *Bannerel.* 8 guns. 83 cartridges. A safe man.—C. *Boubière.* 1 pistol. 40 cartridges.—D. *Rollet.* 1 foil. 1 pistol. 1 lb. of powder.—E. *Teissier.* 1 sabre. 1 cartridge-box. Punctual.—*Terreur.* 8 guns. Brave, etc.

Lastly, this carpenter found, always in the same enclosure, a third paper on which was written in pencil, but very legibly, this specimen of an enigmatical list:

Unité. Blanchard. 'Arbre-Sec, 6.

Barra. Soize. Salle-au-Comte.

Kosciusko. Aubry the butcher?

J. J. R.

Caïus Gracchus.

Right of revision. Dufond. Furnace.

Downfall of the Girondists. Derbac. Maubuée.

Washington. Pinson. 1 pist. 86 cart.

Marseillaise.

Sover. of the people. Michel. Quincampoix. Sabre.

Hoche.

Marceau. Plato. Arbre-sec.

Warsaw. Tilly, crier of the *Populaire*.

The honest bourgeois in whose hands this list remained learned its signification. It seemed that this list was the complete nomenclature of the sections of the fourth arrondissement of the Society of the Rights of Man, with the names and addresses of the chiefs of sections. At the present day, when all these obscure facts have become matters of history only, they may be published. It should be added that the foundation of the Society of the Rights of Man seems to have been poste-

rior to the date on which this paper was found. It may have been that it was only a sketch.

Nevertheless, after the propositions and the words, after the written tokens, material facts began to pierce through.

In the Rue Popincourt, at the house of a dealer in bric-à-brac, were found in the drawer of a chest seven sheets of gray paper, all folded alike in four; these sheets covered again twenty-six squares of the same gray paper, folded in the form of a cartridge, and a card on which could be read:

Saltpetre	12	oz.
Sulphur	2	"
Charcoal	2½	"
Water	2	"

The procès-verbal of the seizure established that the drawer exhaled a strong smell of powder.

A mason returning home, after his day's work, forgetfully left a small parcel on a bench near the bridge of Austerlitz. This parcel was carried to the guard-house. It was opened and in it were found two printed dialogues, signed *Lahautière*, a song entitled: *Working-men Combine*, and a tin box full of cartridges.

A workman drinking with a comrade bade him feel how hot he was; the other noticed a pistol under his jacket.

In a ditch on the boulevard, between Père-Lachaise and the Barrière du Trône, some children, playing at the most deserted spot, discovered under a heap of shavings and pickings a bag that contained a mould for bullets, a wooden mandrel for making cartridges, a pouch in which there were some grains of hunting-powder, a little cast-iron pot on the inside of which were evident signs of melted lead.

Some police agents unexpectedly penetrating at five o'clock in the morning the house of a man named Pardon, who was at a later date a sectionary of the section Barricade-Merry and was killed in the insurrection of April, 1834, found him standing near his bed, holding in his hand cartridges that he was in the act of making.

At the hour when workmen are generally resting, two men were noticed to meet between the Barrière Picpus and the Barrière Charenton, in a lane running between two walls, near a winekeeper's who has a ninepin ground before his door. One took from under his blouse, and handed to the other a pistol. At the moment when he handed it to him he noticed that the perspiration on his chest had damped the powder. He reprimed the pistol and put in powder which he had ready in a pan. Thereupon the two men parted.

A man named Gallais, afterwards killed in the Rue Beaubourg in the April affair, boasted that he had at home seven hundred cartridges and twenty-four gun-flints.

The government received information one day that arms and two hundred thousand cartridges had just been distributed in the faubourgs. The week after thirty thousand cartridges were distributed. The remarkable thing was, the police could not seize any of them. An intercepted letter stated:—"The day is not far distant when in four hours by the clock eighty thousand patriots will be under arms."

All this fermentation was public, we might almost say tranquil. The imminent insurrection prepared its storm with calmness in the face of the government. No singularity was lacking in this crisis which was still subterranean, but already perceptible. The bourgeois spoke peaceably to the workmen of what was preparing. They said: "How is the revolt going on?" in the same tone in which they would have said: "How is your wife?"

A furniture broker, in the Rue Moreau, asked:—"Ah, well, when do you attack?"

Another shop-keeper said:

"They will attack soon, I know it. A month ago there were fifteen thousand of you, now you are twenty-five thousand."—He offered

his gun, and a neighbor offered a small pistol which he could have sold for seven francs.

Besides, the revolutionary fever spread. No point of Paris nor of France was exempt from it. The artery throbbed everywhere. Like the membranes which spring up from certain inflammations and are formed in the human body, the network of secret societies began to spread over the country. From the Association of the Friends of the People, which was at the same time public and secret, sprang the Society of the Rights of Man, which thus dated one of its orders of the day: *Pluviôse, year 40 of the republican era,* a society which was destined to survive even the decrees of the Court of Assizes that pronounced its dissolution, and did not hesitate to give to its sections significant titles such as the following:

"*Pikes.*

"*The tocsin.*

"*The alarm gun.*

"*The Phrygian cap.*

"*January 21.*

"*The Beggars.*

"*The Vagrants.*

"*March forward.*

"*Robespierre.*

"*The level.*

"*Ça ira.*"

The Society of the Rights of Man engen-

dered the Society of Action. These were the impatient men who detached themselves and hurried forward. Other associations tried to recruit themselves in the great mother societies. The sectionaries complained of being teased. Such were *the Gaulish Society* and *the Organizing Committee of the Municipalities*. Such the associations for *the Liberty of the Press*, for *Individual Liberty*, for *the Instruction of the People against indirect Taxes*. Then the Society of Equalitarian Workmen who divided themselves into three fractions, the equalitarians, the communists, the reformers. Then the Army of the Bastilles, a species of cohort possessing military organization, four men being commanded by a corporal, ten by a sergeant, twenty by a sublieutenant, forty by a lieutenant; there were never more than five men who knew each other. This is a creation where precaution is combined with audacity and which seems to be imprinted with the genius of Venice. The central committee which formed the head, had two arms, the Society of Action and the Army of the Bastilles. A legitimist association, the Knights of Fidelity, fidgetted among these republican affiliations. It was denounced and repudiated.

The Parisian societies ramified through the principal cities. Lyons, Nantes, Lille and

Marseilles had their Society of the Rights of Man, The Charbonnière, the Free Men, Aix had a revolutionary society called the Cougourde. We have already mentioned that name.

At Paris the Faubourg Saint-Marceau buzzed no less than the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, and the schools were no less excited than the faubourgs. A coffee-shop in the Rue Saint-Hyacinthe, and the Estaminet des Sept-Billards, in the Rue des Mathurins-Saint-Jacques, served as the rallying-place for the students. The Society of the Friends of the A B C affiliated with the Mutualists of Angers, and the Cougourde of Aix, they assembled, as we have seen, at the Café Musain. The same young men met also, as we have said, at an eating-house and wine-shop near the Rue Mondétour called Corinthe. These meetings were secret. The others were as public as possible, and we may judge of their boldness by this fragment from an interrogatory undergone in one of the ulterior trials:—Where was this meeting held?—In the Rue de la Paix.—At whose house?—In the street.—What sections were there?—Only one.—Which one?—The section Manuel.—Who was the chief?—Myself.—You are much too young to have undertaken all alone this serious resolve to attack the government. Whence came your instructions?—From the central committee.

The army was undermined at the same time as the population, as was proved later by the movements of Belfort, of Lunéville, and of Epinal. Reckonings were built on the fifty-second regiment, on the fifth, on the eighth, on the thirty-seventh, and on the twentieth light infantry. In Burgundy and the towns of the South was planted *the tree of Liberty*, that is to say a mast surmounted by a red cap.

Such was the situation.

This situation, the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, more than any other group of the population, as we have said at the beginning, rendered keen and marked. This was the stitch in the side.

This old faubourg, peopled like an ant-hill, laborious, courageous, and passionate as a hive of bees, quivered in the expectation and in the desire of a commotion. All was agitation there, but labor was not suspended on that account. Nothing could give an idea of these sharp and sombre faces. There are in this faubourg poignant distresses hidden under the roofs of garrets; there are also ardent and rare understandings. It is especially in the case of distress and intelligence that it is dangerous for extremes to meet.

The Faubourg Saint-Antoine had moreover other causes for excitement; for it received the counter-stroke of commercial crises, of bankruptcies, of stoppages, of cessation of

work, which are inherent in all political convulsions. In times of revolution misery is at once a cause and an effect. The blow which it deals recoils upon itself. This population, full of haughty virtue, capable to the highest degree of latent caloric, ever ready to take up arms, prompt to explode, irritated, profound, undermined, seemed to be only waiting for the fall of a spark. Every time that certain sparks float on the horizon, driven by the wind of events, we cannot help thinking of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and of the formidable peril which has placed at the gates of Paris this powder-magazine of sufferings and ideas.

The wine-shops of the *Faubourg Antoine*, which have been more than once referred to in this sketch that we are reading, possess an historic notoriety. In times of trouble people grow intoxicated more on words than on wine. A kind of prophetic spirit and an effluvium of the future circulates there, swelling their hearts and ennobling their souls. The wine-shops of the Faubourg Antoine resemble the taverns on the Mons Aventinus, built over the cave of the Sibyl and communicating with the profound sacred blasts; taverns, in which the tables were almost tripods, and where people drank what Ennius calls *the Sibylline wine*.

The Faubourg Saint-Antoine is a reservoir of the people. The revolutionary earthquake

there makes fissures, through which flows the popular sovereignty. This sovereignty can act badly, it deceives itself like every other thing; but, even when misled, it remains grand. We may say of it as of the blind Cyclops, *Ingens*.

In '93, according as the idea that floated about was good or bad, according as it was the day of fanaticism or of enthusiasm, there issued from this Faubourg Saint-Antoine sometimes legions of savages, sometimes heroic bands.

Savages. Let us explain that word. These bristling men who, in the Genesis of the revolutionary chaos, clothed in rags, yelling, ferocious, with uplifted clubs and raised pikes rushed upon old overthrown Paris, what did they want? They wanted the end of oppressions, the end of tyrannies, the end of the sword, work for the man, instruction for the child, social gentleness for the woman, liberty, equality, fraternity, bread for all, the idea for all, the Edenization of the world, progress; and this holy thing, good and sweet, progress, they, driven to exasperation, scarcely themselves, demanded, terrible, half-naked, with clubs in their fists, curses in their mouths. They were savages, yes; but the savages of civilization.

They proclaimed the right with fury; they wished, even were it through trembling and

horror, to force the human race into Paradise. They seemed barbarians, and they were saviors. They demanded light while wearing the mask of night.

In juxtaposition to these men, ferocious, we admit, and terrible, but ferocious and terrible for good, there are other men, smiling, embroidered, gilded, be-ribboned, be-jewelled, in silk stockings, with white feathers, with yellow gloves, with kid shoes, who, leaning upon a velvet-covered table at the corner of a marble chimney-piece, gently insist on the maintenance and the preservation of the past, of the middle ages, of divine right, of fanaticism, of ignorance, of slavery, of the punishment by death, of war, who glorify in a low voice and with politeness the sabre, the pyre and the scaffold. As for us, if we were compelled to make a choice between the barbarians of civilization and the civilized of barbarism, we would choose the barbarians.

But, thanks be to Heaven, another choice is possible. No fall down an abyss is necessary any more in front than behind. Neither despotism nor terrorism. We wish for progress on a gentle slope.

God provides for this. The moderating of declivities is the whole policy of God.

VI.

ENJOLRAS AND HIS LIEUTENANTS

Shortly after this period, Enjolras, in view of a possible event, made a sort of a mysterious census.

All were assembled in council at the Café Musain.

Enjolras spoke, mingling with his words, a few half-enigmatical but significant metaphors:

"It behoves us to know where we are, and on whom we can count. If we want combatants we must make them. Let us have weapons to strike with. There is no harm in that. Passers-by always run a greater chance of being gored when there are bulls in the road than when there are none. Let us count up the herd a little. How many are we? It will not do to defer this work till to-morrow. Revolutionists should always be in a hurry; progress has no time to lose. Let us distrust the unexpected. We must not allow ourselves to be taken unawares. It behoves us to go

over all the seams which we have sewn, and to see whether they hold. The job must be done thoroughly to-day. Courfeyrac, you will see the Polytechnic students. This is their day for going out. To-day, Wednesday. Feuilly, is it not your part? you will see those of La Glacière. Combeferre has promised to go to Picpus. We have there altogether an excellent swarming. Bahorel will visit the Estrapade. Prouvaire, the masons are growing luke-warm; you will bring us news from the lodge in the Rue de Grenelle-Saint-Honoré. Joly will go to Dupuytren's clinical lecture, and feel the pulse at the Medical School. Bossuet will take a little stroll round the palace and talk with the law-students. I myself will take charge of the Cougourde."

"So everything is settled," said Courfeyrac.

"No."

"What more is there then?"

"One very important thing."

"What is it?" demanded Combeferre.

"The Barrière du Maine," answered Enjolras.

Enjolras stopped a moment absorbed in thought, then continued:

"At the Barrière du Maine are the marble-cutters, the painters, the workers in the sculptors' studios. It is an enthusiastic family, but subject to chills. I do not know what has

been the matter with them for some time past. They are thinking of other things. They are dying out. They spend their time in playing at dominoes. It is urgent to go and talk to them a little and firmly. It is at the house of Richefeu they assemble. They may be found between twelve and one o'clock. Those embers must be blown up. I had reckoned upon that absent fellow Marius for this job, who after all is a good fellow, but he no longer comes here. I need some one for the Barrière du Maine. I have no one left."

"I," said Grantaire, "I am here."

"You?"

"I."

"You indoctrinate republicans! you warm up, in the name of principles, hearts that have grown cold!"

"Why not?"

"Can it be that you are good for anything?"

"Well, I have that vague ambition," said Grantaire.

"You believe in nothing."

"I believe in you."

"Grantaire, will you do me a service?"

"Anything. Clean your boots."

"Ah, well, don't you meddle in our affairs. Sleep off your absinthe."

"You are an ingrate, Enjolras."

"You be the man to go to the Barrière du Maine! you be capable!"

"I am capable of going down the Rue des Grès, crossing the Place Saint-Michel, cutting obliquely through the Rue Monsieur-le-Prince, taking the Rue de Vaugirard, passing the Carmelites, turning into the Rue d'Assas, arriving at the Rue Cherche-Midi, leaving behind me the Council of War, stepping across the Rue des Vieilles-Tuileries, striding along the Boulevard, following the Chaussée du Maine, going through the Barrière and entering Richefeu's. I am capable of that. My shoes are also capable."

"Do you know anything of the comrades at Richefeu's."

"Not much. We only say *thou* and *thee* to one another."

"What will you say to them?"

"I will talk to them about Robespierre, pardi. Of Danton. Of principles."

"You!"

"I. But you do not render me justice. When I make up my mind to it, I am terrible. I have read Prud'homme, I know the Social Contract, I know by heart my constitution of the year Two. 'The liberty of the citizen ends where the liberty of another citizen begins.' Is it that you take me for a brute? I have an old assignat in my drawer. The

Rights of Man, the sovereignty of the people, Sapristi! I am a bit of a Hebertist myself. I can discourse, for six hours of the clock at a stretch, watch in hand, about splendid things."

"Be serious," said Enjolras.

"I am fierce," answered Grantaire.

Enjolras thought for a few seconds, and then made a movement like a man who makes up his mind.

"Grantaire," said he gravely, "I consent to try you. You shall go to the Barrière du Maine."

Grantaire lodged in a furnished room right close to the Café Musain. He went away, and returned five minutes after. He had been home to put on a waistcoat of the Robespierre cut.

"Red," said he, on entering, and looking steadily at Enjolras.

Then, with an energetic slap of his open hand, he turned back on his chest the two scarlet points of the waistcoat.

And walking up to Enjolras, he whispered in his ear:

"Be tranquil."

He boldly cocked his hat, and went out.

A quarter of an hour later, the back room of the Café Musain was deserted. All the Friends of the A B C were gone, each in his

own direction, each to his work. Enjolras, who had reserved the Cougourde for himself, went out last.

The members of the Cougourde of Aix, who were in Paris, assembled at that period on the plain of Issy, in one of the abandoned quarries so numerous on that side of Paris.

Enjolras, while walking toward the place of meeting, took a mental review of the situation. The gravity of the events was visible. When the facts which are the forerunners of a species of latent social disease, move heavily, the slightest complication checks them and impedes them. It is a phenomenon whence issue collapse and second birth. Enjolras caught a glimpse of a luminous upheaving behind the dark sides of the future. Who knew? The moment might be at hand. The people seizing their rights again, what a splendid spectacle! the Revolution majestically taking possession of France once more, and saying to the world: "To be continued to-morrow!" Enjolras was satisfied. The furnace was aglow. He had at that self-same moment a gunpowder train of friends scattered over Paris. He compared in his thoughts, with the philosophic and penetrating eloquence of Combeferre, the cosmopolitan enthusiasm of Feuilly, the rapture of Courfeyrac, the laughter of Bahorel, the melancholy of Jean

Prouvaire, the learning of Joly, the sarcasms of Bossuet, a species of electrical flash producing fire everywhere at once. All were at work. Certainly the result would respond to the effort. That was good. It made him think of Grantaire. "Ah," said he to himself, "the Barrière du Maine is hardly at all out of my way. So suppose I go on to Richefeu's? Let us see a little what Grantaire is doing, and how far he has got."

It was striking one by the Vaugirard bell-tower when Enjolras arrived at Richefeu's smoking-room. He pushed open the door, went in, folded his arms, letting the door fall back, hurting his shoulders, and looked about the room, which was full of tables, of men, and of tobacco smoke.

A voice was audible in this fog, briskly interrupted by another voice. It was Grantaire talking with some opponent of his.

Grantaire was seated, opposite another man, at a table made of Saint-Anne marble, sprinkled with saw-dust and studded with dominoes, he smote the marble with his fist, and this is what Enjolras heard:

"Double-six."

"A four."

"The pig! I haven't any more."

"You are dead. A two."

"A six."

"A three."

"An ace."

"It is my show."

"Four points."

"With difficulty."

"It is yours."

"I made an enormous mistake."

"You are getting on all right."

"Fifteen."

"Seven more."

"That makes me twenty-two. (Dreamily.) Twenty-two!"

"You did not expect the double-six. Had I played it at the beginning, it would have changed the whole game."

"Double deuce."

"An ace."

"An ace! Well, a five!"

"I haven't one."

"You played first, I believe?"

"Yes."

"A blank."

"What luck he has! Ah! you have luck! (A long reverie.) A two."

"An ace."

"I've neither a five nor an ace. That's plaguey for you."

"Domino."

"Oh, the devil!"

BOOK TWO

EPONINE

I.

THE LARK'S FIELD

Marius had witnessed the unexpected dénouement of the trap upon whose track he had placed Javert; but the inspector had hardly left the hovel, taking his prisoners with him in three hackney coaches, ere Marius slipped out of the house in his turn. It was not more than nine o'clock in the evening. Marius went to the house of Courfeyrac. Courfeyrac was no longer the imperturbable inhabitant of the Quartier Latin; he had gone to live in the Rue de la Verrerie, "for political reasons;" this quarter was one of those in which insurrection at that time readily installed itself. Marius said to Courfeyrac: "I am going to sleep with you." Courfeyrac pulled off a mattress from his bed on which he had two, laid it on the ground, and said, "There you are."

The next day, at seven o'clock in the morning, Marius returned to the hovel, paid his quarter's rent and what he owed to Mame

Bougon, placed on a hand-truck his books, his bed, his table, his chest of drawers, and his two chairs, and went away without leaving his address, so that, when Javert returned in the morning in order to question Marius about the events of the previous evening, he only found Mame Bougon, who answered him: "Moved out!"

Mame Bougon was convinced that Marius was in some way an accomplice of the robbers arrested in the night. "Who would have thought it?" she exclaimed to the porteresses of the quarter, "a young man whom you might have taken for a girl!"

Marius had two reasons for this very prompt removal. The first, that he now had a horror of this house in which he had seen, so closely and in all its most repulsive and most ferocious development, a social deformity more frightful still perhaps than the wicked rich man, the wicked poor man. The second, that he did not wish to figure at the trial which would probably ensue, and be obliged to give evidence against Thénardier.

Javert believed that the young man whose name he had forgotten, had been frightened and made his escape, or else had not even returned home at the time of the snare; he made some efforts however to discover him, but they came to nothing.

A month elapsed, then another. Marius was still living with Courfeyrac. He had learned from a young barrister, an habitual walker of the Salle des pas Perdus, that Thénardier was in solitary confinement. Every Monday, Marius had deposited five francs in the clerk's-office of La Force for Thénardier.

Marius, having no money left, borrowed the five francs of Courfeyrac. It was the first time in his life that he had borrowed money. These periodical five francs were a double enigma for Courfeyrac who gave them and for Thénardier who received them. "Where can they go to?" wondered Courfeyrac. "Where can they come from?" Thénardier asked himself.

Marius, however, was broken-hearted. Everything had disappeared again under a trap-door. He saw nothing ahead of him; his life was once more plunged into the mystery in which he had wandered about, groping. He had for a moment seen very closely in this obscurity the young girl whom he loved, the old man who appeared to be her father, these unknown beings who were his only interest and his sole hope in this world; and at the moment when he had believed he should grasp them, a breath had carried off all these shadows. Not a spark of certainty and

of truth had flashed even from that most terrific shock. No conjecture was possible. He no longer even knew the name which he believed he had discovered. Most certainly it was not Ursule. And the Lark was a nickname. And what must he think of the old man? Was he really hiding himself from the police? The workman with white hair whom Marius had met in the vicinity of the Invalides reverted to his mind. It now became probable that this workman and M. Leblanc were the same man. He disguised himself then? This man had his heroic side and his equivocal side. Why had he not called for help? why did he fly? was he, yes or no, the father of the girl? lastly, was he really the man whom Thénardier had fancied he recognized? Thénardier might have been mistaken? These were so many problems without solution. All this, it is true, in no way lessened the angelic charm of the maiden of the Luxembourg. It was a poignant distress; Marius had a passion in his heart, and night over his eyes. He was driven along, he was allured, and he could not stir. All had vanished, except love. Of that love even, he had lost the instincts and the sudden illuminations. Ordinarily this flame which burns us at the same time enlightens us a little, and casts some useful light without. These dumb counsels of passion, Marius no

longer even heard. He never said to himself: Suppose I were to go there? Suppose I were to try this or that thing? She whom he could no longer call Ursule was evidently somewhere; but nothing advised Marius on what side he should seek for her. All his life was now summed up in two words: an absolute uncertainty in an impenetrable fog. That he should see her again; this he was always aspiring after, he hoped it no longer.

To crown all, destitution returned. He felt close beside him, behind him, its icy breath. In all these torments, and for a long time, he had discontinued his work, and nothing is more dangerous than discontinued work; it is a habit which a man loses. A habit easy to give up, but difficult to reacquire.

A certain amount of reverie is good, like a narcotic taken in discreet doses. It lulls to sleep the sometimes harsh fevers of the working brain, and creates in the mind a soft and fresh vapor which corrects the too sharp outlines of pure thought, fills up here and there chasms and spaces, binds the whole together, and rounds the angles of ideas. But excess of reverie submerges and drowns. Woe to the mental workman who allows himself to fall entirely from thought into reverie! He believes that he can easily rise again, and says that after all it is the same thing. This is an error!

Thought is the labor of the intellect, reverie is its voluptuousness. To replace thought by reverie is to confound a poison with food.

Marius, it will be remembered, began with that. Passion arrived, and finished by hurling him into chimeras, without object and without foundation. In such a state a man only leaves home to go and dream. It is a lazy childishness. A tumultuous and stagnant gulf. And in proportion as work diminishes, necessities increase. This is a law. Man in a dreamy state is naturally lavish and inactive; and the relaxed mind can no longer endure the tightened life. There is, in this mode of life, good mingled with evil, for if the softening is mournful, the generosity is healthy and good. But the poor man, generous and noble, who does not work, is lost. The resources dry up, necessities start up.

This is a fatal incline on which the most honest and the strongest men are dragged down like the weakest and the most vicious, and which leads to one of two holes, suicide or crime.

By reason of going out to dream, there comes a day when a man goes out to throw himself into the water.

Excess of dreaming produces such men as Escousse and Libras.

Marius went slowly down this incline, with his eyes fixed upon her whom he saw no more. What we have just written seems strange, and yet it is true. The recollection of an absent being is illumined in the gloom of the heart; the more it disappears the more it beams; the despairing and obscure soul sees this light on its horizon; it is the star of its inner night. She was Marius' entire thought. He dreamed of no other thing. He felt confusedly that his old coat was becoming an impossible coat and that his new coat was growing an old coat, that his shirts were wearing out, that his hat was wearing out, that his boots were wearing out, that is to say, that his life was wearing out, and he said to himself: "If I could only see her again before I die!"

One sole sweet idea was left him, that was that She had loved him, that her glance had told him so, that she did not know his name, but that she knew his soul, and that wherever she now was, however mysterious that spot might be, she loved him still. Who knew but that she might be dreaming of him as he was dreaming of her? At times, in those inexplicable hours which every loving heart knows, as he had only reason to be sad and yet felt within himself an obscure quivering of joy, he said to himself: "These are her thoughts that are visiting me!" Then he

added: "Perhaps my thoughts also go to her."

This illusion, at which he shook his head a moment after, sometimes, however, contrived to cast into his soul rays that had a semblance, at times, of hope. From time to time, especially at that hour of the evening which most saddens dreamers, he poured out upon a quarter of a quire of paper nought but the most pure, the most impersonal, the most ideal of the reveries with which love filled his brain. He called this "writing to her."

We must not believe that his reason was in disorder. On the contrary. He had lost the faculty of working and of moving firmly toward a determined end, but he possessed more than ever clear-sightedness and rectitude. Marius saw by a calm and real light, though singular, all that was passing under his eyes, even the most indifferent facts or men; he spoke correctly of everything with a sort of honest weariness and candid disinterestedness. His judgment, almost detached from hope, held itself aloft and soared above him.

In this state of mind nothing escaped him, nothing deceived him, and he discovered at each moment the bases of life, of humanity and of destiny. Happy, even in agony, is the man to whom God has given a soul worthy of love and of misfortune! He who has not

seen the things of this world and the heart of man in this double light has seen nothing of the truth and knows nothing.

The soul that loves and that suffers is in a sublime state.

Nevertheless days succeeded each other, and nothing new occurred. It only seemed to him that the gloomy space which he still had to traverse was becoming at each moment reduced. He believed that he could already see distinctly the brink of the bottomless abyss.

"What!" repeated he to himself, "can it be that I shall never see her again before that takes place?"

After going up the Rue Saint-Jacques, leaving the barrière on one side, and following for some time on the left the old inner boulevard, you reach the Rue de la Santé, then the Glacière, and, just before coming to the small stream of the Gobelins, you notice a sort of field, which is, throughout the long and monotonous belt of the boulevards of Paris, the only spot where Ruisdael would be tempted to sit down.

I know not whence the charm of the place is obtained, it is a green field traversed by clothes lines, on which rags hang to dry, an old kitchen-gardener's farm-house built in the time of Louis XIII., with its high roof quaintly pierced with garret-windows, broken-down pal-

ings, a little water between poplar trees, some women, some laughter, some voices; on the horizon you see the Panthéon, the tree of the Deaf-Mutes, the Val-de-Grâce, black, stunted, fantastic, amusing, magnificent, and in the background the stern square coping of the towers of Notre-Dame.

As the place is not worth seeing, no one goes to it. Scarcely a cart or a carter passes in a quarter of an hour.

It once happened that the solitary rambles of Marius led him to the piece of ground near this water. On that day there came along the boulevard a rarity, a passer-by. Marius, vaguely struck by the almost savage charm of the place, demanded of the passer-by: "What is the name of this spot?"

The passer-by answered: "It is the Lark's field."

And he added: "It was here that Ulbach killed the shepherdess of Ivry."

But, after the words: "the Lark," Marius heard no more. A word at times suffices to produce a sudden congelation in a dreamy condition. The whole thought is brusquely condensed around an idea, and is no longer capable of any other perception. The Lark, that was the appellation which, in the depths of Marius' melancholy, had taken the place of Ursule. "Stay," said he, with that sort of

unreasoning stupor peculiar to these mysterious asides, "this is her field. I shall learn here where she lives."

This was absurd but irresistible.

And he came every day to this Lark's field.

II.

CRIMES IN EMBRYO INCUBATED IN PRISONS

The triumph of Javert at the hovel Gorbeau had appeared complete, but was not so.

In the first place, and that was his principal anxiety, Javert had not been able to make a prisoner of the prisoner. The assassinated man who escapes is more suspicious than the assassin; and it is probable that this person, however precious a capture for the bandits, might be none the less a precious prize for the authorities.

Next, Montparnasse had slipped away from Javert.

He must wait for another opportunity to lay hands on "that cursed little fop." Montparnasse in fact, having met Eponine who was keeping watch under the trees on the boulevard, went off with her, preferring to play Némorin with the daughter rather than Schinderhannes with the father. It was lucky for him that he had done so. He was free. As for Eponine, Javert had "nailed" her.

That was a poor consolation. Eponine was sent to join Azelma at the Madelonnettes.

Lastly, in the drive from the hovel Gorbeau to La Force, one of the principal men arrested, Claquesous, had disappeared. No one knew how he did it, the agents and the sergeants "did not understand it at all," he had changed into vapor, he had slipped through the handcuffs, he had slid through a crack in the coach, the coach was cracked and he had skipped; no one could say anything, except that on arriving at the prison, there was no Claquesous. There was in this either enchantment, or a police trick. Had Claquesous melted away in the darkness like a flake of snow in the water? Was there an unavowed connivance on the part of the agents? Did this man belong to the double enigma of disorder and of order? Was he concentric at the infraction and at the repression? Had this Sphynx its front paws in crimes and its hind paws in the police? Javert did not at all accept these combinations, and struggled against such compromises; but his squad contained other inspectors beside himself, who though they were his subordinates, were possibly more thoroughly initiated than himself in the secrets of the prefecture, and Claquesous was such a villain that he might be a very excellent agent. To be on such intimate

relations of juggling with night-birds is excellent for brigandage and admirable for the police. There are double-edged rogues of the sort. However this might be, Claquesous was lost and could not be found. Javert appeared more irritated than astonished.

As for Marius, "that booby of a barrister who was probably frightened," and whose name Javert had forgotten, Javert did not trouble himself much about him. Besides, a barrister could always be found, but, was he only a barrister?

The examination was commenced.

The Judge of Instruction had deemed it useful not to put one of the men of the Patron-Minette Band in solitary confinement, as it was hoped he might chatter. This man was Brujon, the hairy man of the Rue du Petit-Banquier. He was turned loose into the Charlemagne yard, and the eyes of spies were turned upon him.

This name, Brujon, is one of the memorials of La Force. In the hideous yard called the New Building, which the administration called the yard of Saint-Bernard, and the thieves christened the Lion's Den, on the wall covered with scars and leprosy, that rose on the left to the height of the roof, close to an old gate of rusty iron which led to the old chapel of the Ducal Hotel de la Force now converted into a

dormitory for brigands, there might have been seen a dozen years ago, a species of Bastille, clumsily engraved with a nail in the stone, and beneath it this signature :

BRUJON, 1811.

The Brujon of 1811 was the father of the Brujon of 1832.

This latter, of whom we could only catch a glimpse during the Gorbeau ambuscade, was a very crafty and very artful young fellow, having a downcast and plaintive air. It was in consequence of this downcast air that the Judge of Instruction turned him loose, believing him more useful in the Charlemagne yard than in a solitary cell.

Robbers do not interrupt their labors because they are in the hands of justice. They do not trouble themselves about such a trifle. Being in prison for one crime does not prevent another crime being commenced. There are artists who have a picture in the Salon and who work none the less upon a new one in their studio.

Brujon seemed stupefied by prison. He might be seen sometimes standing for whole hours in the Charlemagne yard near the window of the canteen-man, gazing like an idiot at the mean tariff of canteen prices, which

began with: *garlic, sixty-two centimes,* and ended with: *cigar, five centimes.* Or else he passed his time in trembling, chattering his teeth, declaring he had the fever, and inquiring whether one of the twenty-eight beds in the Fever Ward was vacant.

All at once, toward the second half of February, 1832, it was discovered that Brujon, the sleepy-head, had dispatched through the prison porters, not in his own name, but under the name of three of his comrades, three different messages, which had cost him altogether fifty sous, an exorbitant sum, which attracted the attention of the corporal of the prison.

After making inquiries and consulting the tariff of messages hung up in the prisoners' visiting room, this authority found out that the fifty sous were thus divided: three messages; one to the Panthéon, ten sous; one to Val-de-Grâce, fifteen sous; and one to the Barrière de Grenelle, twenty-five sous. This last was the dearest of the whole tariff. Now, at the Panthéon, at Val-de-Grâce, at the Barrière de Grenelle, were found the houses of three very dreaded prowlers of the barriers, Kruideniers, called Bizarro, Glorious, an ex-convict, and Stop-the-coach, towards whom this incident directed the attention of the police. It was assumed that these men were affiliated to the

Patron-Minette, of which band two chiefs, Babet and Gueulemer, were locked up. It was supposed that these messages of Brujon, which were not delivered at their houses, but to persons waiting in the street, contained information about some meditated crime. They had still other indications; the three ruffians were arrested, and the police believed they had scented some machination of Brujon's.

A week after these measures had been taken, one night, an inspector of the round, who was examining the sleeping ward on the ground-floor of the New Building, at the moment when he was placing his chestnut in the chestnut-box;—this was the method employed to make sure that the inspectors did their duty properly; every hour a chestnut had to be dropped into all the boxes nailed on the doors of the sleeping wards;—at that moment the inspector saw, through the peep-hole of the dormitory, Brujon sitting up in bed and writing something by the light in the corridor. The turnkey entered, Brujon was placed in solitary confinement for a month, but what he had written could not be found. The police were no wiser than before.

One thing is certain that on the next day a "postillion" was thrown from Charlemagne yard into the Lion's Den over the five-storied building that separated the two courts.

Prisoners gave the name of postillion to a ball of bread artistically kneaded, which is sent *to Ireland*, that is to say, thrown over the roofs in a prison from one yard into another. This is its etymology: over England; from one country to another; that is *to Ireland*. This ball falls into a yard. The man who picks it up opens it and finds in it a note addressed to some prisoner in the court. If it is a prisoner who finds the missive he delivers the note to the right address; if it be a turnkey, or one of those secretly-bought prisoners, called sheep in prisons, and foxes at the galleys, the note is carried to the wicket and delivered to the police.

This time the postillion reached its address, although the man for whom the message was destined was at the time in *solitary confinement*. This person was no other than Babet, one of the four heads of Patron-Minette.

The postillion contained a rolled-up paper, on which were written only two lines:

"Babet. There's a job to be done in Rue Plumet. A gate opens on the garden."

It was the thing that Brujon had written in the night.

In spite of male and female searchers, Babet found means to send the note from La Force to La Salpêtrière to a "sweetheart" he had there, and who was locked up there. This

girl in her turn handed the note to another whom she knew, one called Magnon, actively watched by the police, but not yet arrested. This Magnon, whose name the reader has already seen, was closely connected with the Thénardiers, and as we shall show presently, by going to see Eponine, was able to serve as a bridge between the Salpêtrière and the Madelonnettes.

It arrived just at that very period when the proofs sought for in the Instruction directed against Thénardier with regard to his daughters having proved wanting, Eponine and Azelma were released.

When Eponine went out, Magnon, who was watching for her at the gate of the Madelonnettes, handed her the note from Brujon to Babet, with instructions *to look into* the affair.

Eponine went to Rue Plumet, recognized the grating and the garden, observed the house, spied, watched, and, some days later, carried to Magnon, who lived in Rue Clocheperce, a biscuit, which Magnon transmitted to Babet's mistress at the Salpêtrière. A biscuit, in the dark language of prisons, signifies: *Nothing to be done.*

In less than a week after that Babet and Brujon happened to meet on the way to the Circus de La Force, as one was going "to the

Instruction," and the other was returning: "Well," demanded Brujon, "the Rue P.?" "Biscuit," answered Babet.

Thus the fœtus of crime engendered by Brujon at La Force became abortive.

This abortion, however, had consequences perfectly foreign to the programme of Brujon. We shall see.

Often when believing that we are knotting one thread, we tie another.

III.

AN APPARITION TO FATHER MABEUF

Marius no longer called on anyone, only at times he happened to encounter Father Mabeuf.

While Marius was slowly descending the mournful steps which might be called the cellar stairs, and which lead to places without light, on which you hear the footsteps of the prosperous above your head, M. Mabeuf was also descending.

The *Flora of Cauteretz* had absolutely no further sale. The experiments with indigo had not been successful in the little garden of Austerlitz, which had a bad exposure. M. Mabeuf could only cultivate in it a few rare plants which loved humidity and shade. For all that, though, he was not discouraged. He had obtained a strip of ground at the Jardin des Plantes, with a good aspect, on which to carry on his indigo experiments "at his own charges." To do this he pledged the copper-plates of his *Flora* at the Mont-de-Piété. He

reduced his breakfast to two eggs, and of these he left one for his old servant, whose wages he had not paid for fifteen months. And very often his breakfast was his sole meal. He no longer laughed with his childish laugh, he had grown morose, and received no more visits. Marius did well no longer to dream of coming. Sometimes, at the hour when M. Mabeuf went to the Jardin des Plantes, the old man and the young man passed each other on the Boulevard de l'Hôpital. They did not speak, and shook their heads sorrowfully. It is a sad thing that the moment arrives when misery parts friends! They had been two friends, they were now two passers-by.

The publisher Royol was dead. M. Mabeuf knew nothing else than his books, his garden, and his indigo; these were the three shapes which happiness, pleasure, and hope had assumed for him. They sufficed him to live. He said to himself: "When I have made my balls of blue, I shall be rich, I will redeem my plates from the Mont-de-Piété, I will bring my *Flora* into vogue with charlatanism, the big drum, and advertisements in the papers, and I will buy, I well know where, a copy of the *Art of Navigation* by Pierre de Médine, with woodcuts, edition 1559." In the meanwhile, he toiled all day at his indigo patch, and in the evening went home to water

his garden and read his books. M. Mabeuf at this epoch was very near eighty years of age.

One evening he had a singular apparition.

He had returned home while it was still daylight. Mother Plutarch, whose health was out of sorts, was unwell and had gone to bed. He dined upon a bone on which a little meat remained and on a piece of bread which he had found on the kitchen table, and was seated on an overturned stone post which acted as a bench in his garden.

Near this bench there was, after the fashion of old kitchen-gardens, a sort of barn with very dilapidated joists and planks, having a rabbit-hutch on the ground-floor, and a fruit-loft on the first floor. There were no rabbits in the hutch, but there were a few apples in the fruit-loft. They were the remnant of the winter stock.

M. Mabeuf was turning over the leaves and reading, with the aid of his spectacles, two books for which he had a great liking, and which even, a more grave thing at his age, preoccupied him. His natural timidity rendered him prone to a certain acceptation of superstitions. The first of these books was the famous treatise of President Delancre, *On the Inconstancy of Demons*, the other was the quarto work of Mutor de la Rubaudière,

On the Demons of Vauvert and the Goblins of la Bièvre. The latter old book interested him the more, because his garden had been in olden times one of the places haunted by the goblins. Twilight was beginning to whiten what is above and blacken what is below. While reading, Father Mabeuf looked over the book which he held in his hand at his plants, and among others at a magnificent rhododendron, which was one of his consolations; four days of scorching heat, of wind and of sun without a drop of rain had passed; the stems were bending, the buds drooping, the leaves falling, they all had need of watering; the rhododendron especially looked in a sad way. Father Mabeuf was one of those men for whom plants have souls. The old man had been at work all day in his indigo patch, he was worn out with fatigue, but for all that he raised himself, placed his books on the bench, and walked all bent, and with tottering steps, up to the well, but when he seized the chain, he had not sufficient strength to unhook it. Then he turned himself and cast a glance of anguish at the sky, which was glittering with stars.

The evening had that serenity which crushes the griefs of man under I know not what lugubrious and eternal joy. The night promised to be as dry as had been the day.

"Stars everywhere!" thought the old man;

"not the smallest cloud! not a drop of water!"

And his head, which had been raised a moment, fell again on his breast.

Then he raised himself again and looked once more at the sky, murmuring:

"One drop of dew! a little pity!"

He tried once again to unhook the chain of the well, but could not succeed.

At this moment he heard a voice that said:

"Father Mabeuf, do you wish that I should water your garden?"

At the same time a sound like that of a wild beast breaking through was heard in the hedge, and he saw emerge from the brushwood a sort of tall thin girl who stood before him regarding him boldly. She had less of the air of a human being than of a form engendered of the twilight.

Before Father Mabeuf, who was easily scared and who, as we have said, took quick alarm, found time to answer one syllable, this creature, whose movements had in the gloom a sort of strange abruptness, had unhooked the chain, let down and drawn up the bucket, and filled the watering-pot, and the old gentleman saw this apparition, who had bare feet and a petticoat in tatters, running along the flower-beds, distributing life around her. The sound of the water pattering on the leaves

filled the soul of Father Mabeuf with ravishment. It seemed to him now that the rhododendron was happy.

The first bucket emptied, the girl drew a second, then a third. She watered the whole garden.

To see her moving thus along the walks in which her outline appeared wholly black, waving on her long thin arms her very ragged shawl, she bore a striking resemblance to a bat.

When she had finished, Father Mabeuf approached her with tears in his eyes, and laid his hand on her forehead.

"God will bless you," said he, "you are an angel, since you take care of flowers."

"No," replied she, "I am the devil, but that's all one to me."

The old man cried, without hearing and without waiting for her answer:

"What a pity that I am so unhappy and so poor, and that I can do nothing for you!"

"You can do something," said she.

"What?"

"Tell me where M. Marius lives."

The old man did not understand.

"What Monsieur Marius?"

He raised his glassy eyes and seemed to seek something which had vanished.

"A young man who came here formerly."

In the meantime M. Mabeuf began to ransack his memory.

"Ah, yes," . . . exclaimed he, "I know what you would say. Wait a moment! Monsieur Marius . . . the Baron Marius Pontmercy, parbleu! He lives . . . or rather he does not live. . . Ah, well, I do not know."

While speaking, he had stooped to straighten a branch of the rhododendron, and he continued:

"Hold, I remember now. He passes very often along the boulevard and goes by the side of La Glacière. Rue Croulebarbe. The Lark's field. Go there. He will not be difficult to find."

When M. Mabeuf raised himself again, he was alone, the girl had disappeared.

He was decidedly a little frightened.

"Truly," thought he, "if my garden were not watered, I should believe that it was a ghost."

An hour later, when he was in bed, this idea returned to him, and, while falling asleep, just at that disturbed moment when thought, like the fabulous bird which changes itself into a fish to cross the sea, gradually takes the form of a dream to cross through sleep, he said to himself confusedly:

"In point of fact, this affair greatly resembles what La Rubaudière relates about the goblins. Could it have been a goblin?"

iV.

AN APPARITION TO MARIUS

A few days after this visit of a "ghost" to Father Mabeuf, one morning,—it was on a Monday, the day of the piece of one hundred sous, which Marius borrowed of Courfeyrac for Thénardier,—Marius placed this coin of one hundred sous in his pocket, and before carrying it to the clerk's office, he resolved to "take a little walk," hoping that on his return this would make him work. It was, however, everlastingly so. As soon as he rose, he sat down before a book and a sheet of paper to patch up some translation; he had at this period for a job the translation into French of a celebrated German quarrel, the controversy between Gans and Savigny; he took up Savigny, he took up Gans, read four lines, tried to write one but could not, saw a star between his paper and himself, and got up from his chair, saying: "I will go out. That will put me in the humor."

And he went to the Lark's field.

There he saw the star more than ever, and less than ever Savigny and Gans.

He went home, tried to resume his task, and did not succeed; he could not join a single one of the threads broken in his brain; then he said: "I will not go out to-morrow at all. It is that which prevents me from working." And he went out every day.

He lived in the Lark's field more than at the lodging of Courfeyrac. His right address was this: Boulevard de la Santé at the seventh tree past the Rue Croulebarbe.

On this morning he had left the seventh tree and was seated on the parapet-wall of the River des Gobelins. The merry sunbeams flashed through the expanded and luminous leaves.

He dreamed of "Her." And his reverie, becoming a reproach, fell back on himself; he thought bitterly of the sloth and paralysis of soul, which were gaining on him, and of that night which grew denser from moment to moment before him, so that he could no longer even see the sun.

Still, across this painful evolvement of indistinct ideas which was not even a soliloquy, inasmuch as action was so weak in him, and he had no longer even the strength to try and feel sad, across this melancholy absorption, sensations from without reached him. He heard behind him, below him, on both sides

of the river, the washerwomen of the Gobelins beating their linen, and, above his head, the birds twittering and singing in the elms. On one side, the sound of liberty, of happy carelessness, of winged leisure; on the other the sound of labor. The two joyous sounds made him think deeply and almost reflect.

All at once in the midst of his poignant ecstasy he heard a familiar voice which said:

"Ah! here he is!"

He raised his eyes and recognized the unhappy girl who had come to his house one morning, the elder of Thénardier's daughters, Eponine; he knew now what her name was. Strange to say, she had grown poorer and more beautiful, two things which he had not thought possible. She had accomplished a double progress, towards light and towards distress. She was barefooted and in rags, as on the day when she had entered so resolutely into his room, only the rags were two months older; the holes were larger, the tatters more sordid. She had the same hoarse voice, the same forehead bronzed and wrinkled by exposure, the same free, disordered and wandering look. She had, in addition, as formerly, on her countenance, a certain something, startled and lamentable, which the passing through a prison adds to misery.

She had pieces of straw and hay in her hair,

not that, like Ophelia, she had gone mad through contagion with the lunacy of Hamlet, but because she had slept in some stable-loft.

And with all that she was beautiful. What a star art thou, O youth!

Nevertheless she had stopped before Marius with a little joy on her livid face, and something that resembled a smile.

It was some moments before she could speak.

"I have found you then!" said she at last. "Father Mabeuf was right, it was in this boulevard! How I have sought you! if you only knew! Do you know this? I have been in quod. Fifteen days! They let me go! For there was nothing against me, and, besides, I had not attained to the years of discretion. I wanted two months to that. Oh! how I have looked for you. Six weeks. You no longer live down there then?"

"No," said Marius.

"Oh, I understand. On account of that thing. Such disturbances are disagreeable. You have moved. Hilloh! why do you wear such an old hat as that? a young man like you ought to have handsome clothes. Do you know, Monsieur Marius? Father Mabeuf calls you the Baron Marius I forget what. You are not really a baron are you? Barons are old swells, who walk in the Luxembourg in

front of the palace, where there is the most sun, and read the *Quotidienne* for a sou. I went once to carry a letter to a baron who was like that. He was more than a hundred years old. Tell me, where do you live now?"

Marius did not answer.

"Ah," continued she, "you have a hole in your shirt-front. I must sew it up again for you."

She continued with an expression which little by little grew gloomier: "You do not seem pleased to see me!"

Marius held his tongue; she also kept silence for a moment, and then cried out:

"If I liked now, I could force you to look pleased!"

"What?" demanded Marius. "What do you want to say?"

"Ah! you question me!" replied she.

"Well, what have you to say?"

She bit her lip; she appeared to hesitate as if suffering from a kind of internal struggle. At length she seemed to make up her mind.

"So much the worse, but no matter. You have a sad air and I want you to be pleased. Only promise me that you will laugh. I want to see you laugh and hear you say: 'Ah, well! that is famous.' Poor Monsieur Marius! you know! you have promised that you would give me all that I wanted . . ."

"Yes, but speak then!"

She looked Marius full in the eyes and said to him: "I have the address."

Marius turned pale. All his blood flowed to his heart.

"What address?"

"The address that you asked me for!"

She added as if she made an effort:

"The address . . . you know very well?"

"Yes!" stammered Marius.

"The young lady's!"

Those words pronounced, she sighed profoundly.

Marius leaped from the parapet on which he was sitting and distractedly seized her hand.

"Oh! right! lead me to it! tell me! ask of me what you please! where is it?"

"Come with me," answered she. "I don't exactly know the street and the number; it is quite on the other side of the town, but I know the house well, I will take you to it."

She withdrew her hand and continued, in a tone which would have broken the heart of an observer, but did not at all affect the intoxicated and transported Marius:

"Oh! how pleased you are!"

A cloud passed over the forehead of Marius. He clutched Eponine by the arm.

"Swear one thing!"

"Swear?" said she, "what do you mean

by that? Stay! what would you have me swear?"

And she laughed.

"Your father! promise me, Eponine! swear to me that you will never tell this address to your father!"

She turned to him with a stupefied air.

"Eponine! how do you know that I am called Eponine?"

"Promise me what I ask you."

But she seemed not to hear him.

"That is nice! you called me Eponine!"

Marius caught hold of both her arms at once.

"But answer me in Heaven's name! pay attention to what I say, swear to me that you will not tell your father the address which you know."

"My father?" said she. "Ah, yes, my father! Be easy. He's in solitary confinement. Besides, what do I care for my father!"

"But you have not promised me!" cried Marius.

"Well, let go of me then!" said she, as she burst out laughing, "how you are shaking me! Yes! yes! I promise you that! I swear that! how does it concern me? I will not tell my father the address. There! does that suit you? is that it?"

"And no one else?" said Marius.

"And no one else."

"Now," continued Marius, "lead me there."

"At once?"

"At once."

"Come on! Oh, how glad he is!" said she.

After a few steps she stopped.

"You are following me too closely, Monsieur Marius. Let me go on in front and do you follow me, without seeming to do so. It is not becoming that a respectable young man like you should be seen with such a woman as I am."

No language could express all that was contained in the word "woman," as it was pronounced by this girl.

She went a dozen paces and stopped again; Marius rejoined her. She said to him aside and without turning toward him:

"By the by, you know that you promised me something?"

Marius felt in his pocket. He possessed in the world nothing but the five francs destined for Father Thénardier. He took them and placed them in the hand of Eponine.

She opened her hand and let the piece fall on the ground, and regarding him with a sombre air:

"I do not want your money," said she.

BOOK THREE

THE HOUSE IN THE RUE PLUMET

I.

THE MYSTERIOUS HOUSE

About the middle of the last century, a president of the parliament of Paris who had a mistress and kept her under the rose, for at that epoch the grandees displayed their mistresses and the bourgeois concealed theirs, built "a small house" in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, in the deserted Rue de Blomet, which is called to-day Rue Plumet, not far from the spot which was formerly known as the *Combat of the Animals*.

This house consisted of a single-storied pavilion, having two large rooms on the ground-floor, two bed-rooms on the first, a kitchen below, a boudoir above, under the roof an attic, the whole surrounded by a garden with a large railing looking out on the street. The garden was about an acre. This was all that passers-by could see; but in the rear of the pavilion was a narrow yard, and at the bottom of the yard an outhouse containing two cellar-like rooms, destined as a place

in which to conceal, if necessary, an infant and a nurse. This outhouse communicated, at the back, through a concealed door which opened secretly, with a long narrow passage, paved, winding, open to the sky, and bordered by two lofty walls, which concealed with prodigious art, and, as it were, lost between the garden walls, whose every turn and winding it followed, led to another door equally concealed, which opened about an eighth of a league off, almost in another quarter, at the solitary end of the Rue de Babylone.

Monsieur the president went in by this door, so ingeniously, that even those who might have spied upon and followed him and who had observed that M. the president betook him every day somewhere, mysteriously, could not have suspected that in going to the Rue de Babylone he was going to the Rue Blomet. Thanks to clever purchases of land, the ingenious magistrate had been enabled to make this hidden road to his house upon his own land, and consequently uncontrolled. At a later date he sold in small lots for market and kitchen gardens the plots of land bordering the passage, and the owners of these plots of land on either side believed that they had before their eyes a party-wall, and did not even suspect the existence of this long strip of pavement winding

between two walls among their flower-beds and their orchards. The birds alone saw this curiosity. It is probable that the linnets and tomtits of the last century gossiped a good deal about M. the president.

The pavilion, built of stone in the Mansard taste, and panelled and furnished in the Watteau style, rock-work outside, periwig within, begirt by a triple hedge of flowers, had something discreet, coquettish, and solemn about it, as befitted the caprices of love and of a magistrate.

This house and this passage, which have disappeared to-day still existed fifteen years ago. In '93 a brazier bought the house to demolish it, but as he could not pay its price, the nation made him bankrupt. Thus it was the house that demolished the brazier. Since then the house had remained uninhabited, and fell slowly into ruins, like every residence to which the presence of man no longer communicates life. It remained furnished with its old furniture and always on sale or to let, and the ten or twelve persons who in the course of a year pass the Rue Plumet were so informed by a yellow and illegible placard fastened to the gate of the garden since 1810.

Toward the end of the Restoration the same passers-by might have noticed that the placard had disappeared, and even that the window-

shutters of the first-floor were open. The house was really occupied. The windows had "those short curtains" which indicate that there is a woman in the house.

In the month of October, 1829, a man of a certain age presented himself and hired the house as it stood, including, be it well understood, the rear premises and the passage which led out on to the Rue de Babylone. He had had repaired the concealed openings of the two doors of this passage. The house, as we have been saying, was still furnished pretty much with the old furniture of the president, the new tenant only ordered a few repairs, added here and there what he wanted, restored the paving of the yard, some bricks in the brick-pavements, the steps of the staircase, some portions of the floors and some panes in the windows, and lastly installed himself there with a young girl and an old woman-servant, without noise, and more like a man who slips into than like one who enters his own house. The neighbors, however, did not chatter, for the reason that he had no neighbors.

The tenant in reality was Jean Valjean, the girl was Cosette. The servant was a female named Toussaint, whom Jean Valjean had saved from the hospital and wretchedness, and who was old, provincial and a stammerer, three qualities which had determined Jean Val-

jean to take her with him. He hired the house under the name of M. Fauchelevent, annuitant. In all that we have recounted above, the reader without doubt, still less tardily than Thénardier, has recognized Jean Valjean.

Why had Jean Valjean quitted the convent of the Little Picpus? What had occurred there?

Nothing had occurred.

It will be borne in mind that Jean Valjean was happy in the convent, so happy that his conscience at last began to disturb him. He saw Cosette every day, he felt paternity springing up and being developed in him more and more, he poured out his whole soul upon this child, he said to himself that she was his, that nothing could rob him of her, that it would be so indefinitely, that she would certainly become a nun, as she was each day gently urged to it, also that the convent henceforth was the universe for her as for him, that he would grow old in it and that she would grow up there, that she would grow old there and that he would die there, and that, finally, ravishing hope, no separation was possible. While reflecting on this, he began falling into perplexities. He interrogated himself. He demanded of himself if all this happiness was really his, if it was not composed of the

happiness of another, of the happiness of this child, of which he, himself an old man, confiscated and deprived her; and if this was not altogether a robbery? He said to himself that this child had the right to know life before renouncing it, that he so depriving her, beforehand and without consultation with her about the matter, of all joys under the pretext of saving her from all trials, and profiting by her ignorance and her isolation was to make an artificial vocation spring up in her, was to denaturalize a human creature and lie to God. And who knew whether, some day when taking an account of all this and feeling herself a reluctant nun, Cosette might not grow to hate him? It was a last thought, almost selfish and less heroic than the others, but to him it was insupportable. He resolved to quit the convent.

He resolved, and recognized with heart-grief that he must do this. As for objections, there were none. Five years of sojourn between those four walls, and of disappearance, had necessarily destroyed or dispersed the elements of fear. He could return among men tranquilly. He had grown old and all was changed. Who would recognize him now? And then, to look at the worst, there was only danger for himself, and he

had not the right to condemn Cosette to a cloister, because he had been condemned to the galleys. Besides, what is danger in the presence of duty? Lastly then, nothing prevented him from being prudent and taking precautions.

As for the education of Cosette, it was almost terminated and complete.

Once his determination was arrived at, he awaited the opportunity. This was not tardy in presenting itself. Old Fauchelevent died.

Jean Valjean requested an audience of the reverend prioress, and told her that as he had inherited on the death of his brother a small heritage, which would enable him to live henceforth without working, he was going to quit the service of the convent, and take away his daughter; but, as it was not just that Cosette, who was not going to take the vows, should have been educated gratuitously, he humbly implored the reverend prioress to allow him to offer to the community, as an indemnity for the five years that Cosette had passed among them, a sum of five thousand francs.

It was thus that Jean Valjean quitted the convent of the Perpetual Adoration.

On leaving the convent he himself carried in his arms, and would not intrust to any

commissionaire, the little valise, of which he always had the key about him. This valise puzzled Cosette, because of the aromatic odor which issued from it.

Let us say at once that this trunk never quitted him again. He always had it in his bed-room. It was the first, and sometimes the only thing that he carried away in his removals. Cosette laughed, and called this valise *the inseparable*, saying: "I am jealous of it."

Jean Valjean, however, never went out into the free air without a profound anxiety.

He discovered the house in the Rue Plumet, and cowered there. He was henceforth in possession of the name of Ultime Fauchelevent.

At the same time he hired two other lodgings in Paris, to the end that he might the less attract attention than if he had always remained in the same quarter, that he might, if necessary, absent himself for awhile upon the least inquietude assailing him, and lastly, that he might not be taken unaware, as on the night when he had so miraculously escaped from Javert. These two rooms were lodgings of a very paltry and mean appearance, in two quarters very far away the one from the other, one being in the Rue de l'Ouest, the other in the Rue de l'Homme-Armé.

He went from time to time, sometimes to

the Rue de l'Homme-Armé, sometimes to the Rue de l'Ouest, to pass a month or six weeks with Cosette without taking with him Toussaint. He was waited on by the door-porters, and represented himself as an annuitant from the suburbs who had a temporary lodging in town. This lofty virtue had three domiciles in Paris in order to escape the police.

II.

JEAN VALJEAN A NATIONAL GUARD

Properly speaking, however, he lived in the Rue Plumet, and he had arranged his existence there in the following fashion :

Cosette with the servant occupied the pavilion ; she had the best bed-room, with the painted pier-glass, the boudoir with the gilt beading, the drawing-room of the president, furnished with tapestries and vast arm-chairs ; she had the garden. Jean Valjean placed in Cosette's room a bed with a canopy of ancient damask in three colors, and an old and handsome Persian carpet, purchased in the Rue Figuier-Saint-Paul at the shop of Mother Gaucher, and, to correct the severity of these old splendors, he mingled with some bric-a-brac all the light gay pleasant furniture suitable for young girls, an etagère, book-shelves with books in gilt bindings, a writing-desk, a blotting-case, a work-table inlaid with mother-of-pearl, a silver-gilt dressing-case, toilette articles of Japanese porcelain. Long damask

curtains having a red ground worked in three colors, like those on the bed, festooned the first-floor windows. On the ground-floor the curtains were of tapestry. All through the winter Cosette's little house was warmed from top to bottom. Valjean himself lived in the sort of porter's lodge, which stood in the back-yard, which was furnished with a mattress on a folding-bed, a deal table, two straw-bottomed chairs, an earthenware water-jug, a few books on a plank, his dear valise in a corner, never a fire. He dined with Cosette, and he had black bread for himself on the table. He had said to Toussaint, when she came, "It is mademoiselle who is mistress of the house." "And you, sir?" had Toussaint replied, stupefied. "I, I am much better than the master, I am the father."

Cosette had been taught house-keeping in the convent, and regulated the expenses, which were very modest. Every day Jean Valjean gave Cosette his arm and took her for a walk. He led the way to the Luxembourg, choosing the least frequented allée, and every Sunday they attended mass, always choosing the church of Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas, because it was a long distance off. As it is a very poor district, he gave away much alms, and the wretched flocked around him in the church, which had caused the letter of Thénardier:

To the Benevolent Gentleman of the Church of Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas. He willingly took Cosette to visit the indigent and the sick. No stranger ever entered the house in the Rue Plumet. Toussaint bought the provisions, and Jean Valjean himself fetched the water from a cistern close by, on the boulevard. The wood and wine were kept in a semi-subterranean building covered with rock-work, which was near the door in the Rue de Babylone, and which formerly had served as a grotto to M. the president; for in the age of the Follies and Small-Houses, there could be no love without a grotto.

There was in the bastard door on the Rue de Babylone a box, like a money box, destined for letters and for newspapers; only the three inhabitants of the pavilion of the Rue Plumet received no newspapers, no letters, so that the only utility of the box, once on a time the go-between in amourettes, and the confidant of a foppish limb of the law, was now restricted to tax-papers and to guard-summonses. For M. Fauchelevent, annuitant, belonged to the National Guard; he had been unable to escape the strict meshes of the census of 1831. The municipal inquiries made at that epoch extended even to the convent of the Little Picpus, a place of nearly impenetrable and holy retirement, whence Jean Valjean emerged venerable

in the sight of the mayor, and, consequently, worthy to mount guard.

Three or four times a year Jean Valjean donned his uniform and went on duty; moreover, very readily; it was a correct disguise, which enabled him to mix with all the world, while himself remaining solitary. Jean Valjean had attained his sixtieth year, the age of legal exemption; but he did not look more than fifty; besides he had no wish to avoid his sergeant-major and to cheat Count Lobau; he had no civil status; he concealed his name, he concealed his identity, he concealed his age, he concealed everything, and, as we have just said, he was a National Guard of his own good-will. To resemble the first-comer who pays his taxes, was his whole ambition. The ideal of this man was internally an angel, externally a bourgeois.

Let us mention one detail, for all that. When Jean Valjean went out with Cosette, he dressed himself in the manner we have seen and had, sufficiently, the air of and looked like a retired officer. When he went out alone, and he did so most usually in the evening, he was always attired in the jacket and trousers of a workman, and was covered with a peaked cap which concealed his face. Was this precaution, or humility? Both at once. Cosette was accustomed to the enigmatical side of her

destiny, and hardly remarked the singularities of her father. As for Toussaint, she venerated Jean Valjean, and considered everything good that he did. One day her butcher, who got a glimpse of Jean Valjean, said to her: "He's a droll fellow." She replied: "He's a—a saint."

Neither Jean Valjean, nor Cosette, nor Toussaint ever entered or left the house except by the gate in the Rue de Babylone. Unless they were noticed through the gate of the garden it was difficult to divine that they lived in the Rue Plumet. This gate was always locked. Jean Valjean left the garden untended in order that it might not attract attention.

In this, perhaps, he deceived himself.

III.

FOLIIS AC FRONDIBUS

This garden thus left to itself for more than half a century, had become extraordinary and charming. Passers-by forty years ago stopped in the street to gaze at it, without suspecting the secrets which it hid behind its fresh and green screens. More than one dreamer, at that epoch, many times allowed his eyes and his thoughts indiscreetly to penetrate across the bars of the old locked, twisted, shaky gate, which hung from two mould-covered and moss-grown pillars, fantastically surmounted by a pediment covered with undecipherable arabesques.

There was a stone bench in a corner, one or two mouldering statues, some trellis-work, unnailed by time, rotting against the walls; moreover most of the walks had no turf left; there was dog's-grass everywhere. Gardening had disappeared, and nature had returned. Weeds abounded, an admirable arrangement for a sorry spot of land. The festival of the

gilly-flowers was splendid there. Nothing in this garden impeded the sacred efforts of things toward life; time-honored growth was at home there. The trees had bent down to the briars, the briars had mounted toward the trees, the plants had clambered up, the branches had bent down, what crawls on the ground had gone to meet what expands in the air, what floats in the wind had stooped down to what drags along the moss; brambles, branches, leaves, fibres, tufts, twigs, tendrils, thorns, were mixed together, crossed, wedded, confounded; vegetation, in a close and profound embrace, had celebrated and accomplished here, beneath the satisfied eye of the Creator, in this enclosure of three hundred square feet, the holy mystery of its fraternity, a symbol of human fraternity. This garden was no longer a garden, it was a colossal thicket; that is to say, something which is as impenetrable as a forest, as populous as a city, as rustling as a nest, as sombre as a cathedral, as fragrant as a bouquet, as solitary as a tomb, and as lively as a crowd.

In spring, this enormous thicket, at liberty behind its gate and within its four walls, played its part in the dull task of universal germination, quivered in the rising sun almost like the animal that respires the effluvia of cosmic love, and feels the sap of April ascend-

ing and boiling in its veins, and, shaking in the wind its prodigious green foliage, the thicket was scattering on the damp ground, on the defaced statues, on the crumbling steps of the pavilion, and even over the pavement of the deserted street, constellations of flowers, pearls of dew, fecundity, beauty, life, joy, perfumes. At mid-day a thousand white butterflies took refuge in it, and it was a divine spectacle to watch this living snow of summer falling in flakes through the shadow. There, in the pleasant gloom of the foliage, a multitude of innocent voices gently addressed the soul, and what the twittering forgot to say the buzzing completed. In the evening a vapor of reverie arose from the garden and enveloped it; a cerecloth of mist, a celestial and calm melancholy, covered it; the intoxicating smell of the honeysuckle and the bind-weed ascended on every side like an exquisite and subtle poison; the last appeals of the woodpeckers and the goldfinches could be heard, ere they fell asleep under the branches; and the sacred intimacy between the bird and the tree was felt; by day the wings gladden the leaves, at night the leaves protect the wings.

In winter the thicket was black, dank, bristling, shivering, and allowed a little glimpse of the house. One perceived, instead of flowers among the branches and of dew upon

the flowers, the long silvery trail of the snails on the cold and thick-sown bed of yellow leaves; but in any case, under any aspect, in every season, spring, winter, summer, autumn, this little enclosure respired melancholy, contemplation, solitude, liberty, the absence of man, the presence of God; and the old rusty railings had an air of saying, "This garden is mine."

Although the streets of Paris looked beautiful all around, the classical and splendid mansions of the Rue de Varennes were within a stone's throw, the dome of the Invalides close by, the Chamber of Deputies at no great distance; although the carriages from the Rue de Bourgogne and the Rue Saint-Dominique rolled along luxuriously in the vicinity, and yellow, brown, white and red omnibuses crossed the adjoining square, the Rue Plumet was a desert; and the death of the old proprietors, a revolution which had passed, the overthrow of old fortunes, absence, forgetfulness, forty years of desertion and of widowhood, had sufficed to bring back to this privileged spot ferns, lady's-foxglove, hemlock, milfoil, tall grass, great flaunting plants with large leaves of a pale greenish drab, lizards, beetles, restless and rapid insects; causing to spring from the depths of the earth and to reappear between these four walls I know not what savage and

stern grandeur; and nature, who disconcerts the paltry arrangements of man and who always diffuses abundantly where she diffuses at all and is equally as perfect in the ant as in the eagle, had displayed herself in a paltry little Parisian garden with as much roughness and majesty as in a virgin forest of the New World.

Nothing is small, in fact; anyone who is affected by the profound penetrations of nature knows this. Although no absolute satisfaction can be granted to philosophy, though it can no more circumscribe the cause than it can limit the effect, the contemplator falls into unfathomable ecstasy when he watches all the decomposition of forces which result in unity. Everything labors for everything.

Algebra is applied to the clouds; the irradiation of the planet benefits the rose; no thinker would dare to say that the perfume of the hawthorn is useless to the constellations. Who then can calculate the passage of a molecule? who among us knows whether the creations of worlds are not determined by the fall of grains of sand? Who then is acquainted with the reciprocal flow and ebb of the infinitely great and of the infinitely little, the echo of motives in the precipices of existence and the avalanches of creation? A maggot is of importance; the little is great, the great is little;

all is in a state of equilibrium in necessity; this is a terrific vision for the mind. There are between beings and things prodigious relations; in this inexhaustible total, from the sun to the flea, nothing scorns the other; all have need of one another. Light does not carry into the sky terrestrial perfumes without knowing what to do with them; night makes the distributions of planetary essence to the sleeping flowers. Every bird that flies has round its foot the thread of infinity. Germination is equally displayed in the outburst of a meteor and the peck of the beak of the swallow breaking the egg, and it leads to the front, equally, the birth of an earth-worm and the advent of Socrates. Where ends the telescope, the microscope commences. Which of the two has the grander sight? You can choose. A mouldiness is a pleiad of flowers; a nebulosity is an ant-hill of stars. There is the same and even a more extraordinary promiscuity of the things of the intellect and the facts of the substance. The elements and the principles are mingled, combined, wedded together, and multiply one another till they lead the material world and the moral world into the same light. The phenomenon is a perpetual answer to itself. In the vast cosmic exchanges, universal life goes and comes in unknown quantities, revolv-

ing everything in the invisible mystery of effluvia, employing everything, losing not a single dream of a sleep, sowing an animalcule here, crumbling a star there, oscillating and winding, making of light a force and of thought an element, disseminated and indivisible, dissolving everything save that geometrical point, the I; bringing back everything to the atom soul; expanding everything in God; entangling from the highest even to the lowest all the activities in the obscurity of a vertiginous mechanism, attaching the flight of an insect to the movement of the earth, subordinating, (who knows?) if only through the identity of the law, the evolution of the comet in the firmament to the rotatory movement of the Infusoria in the drop of water. A machine made of soul. It is an enormous gear, in which the prime mover is the gnat, and in which the last wheel is the Zodiac.

IV.

CHANGE OF GRATING

It seemed as if this garden, created in former times to conceal libertine mysteries, had been transformed and become proper to shelter chaste mysteries. There were no longer any cradles, no bowling-greens, no covered walks, no grottos; there was a magnificent tangled obscurity falling like a cloak all around. Paphos was changed into Eden. One cannot know what penitent feeling had refreshed this retreat. A flower-girl now offered flowers to the soul. This coquettish garden, once on a time so compromised, had returned to virginity and modesty. A president assisted by a gardener, a good fellow who believed himself the successor of Lamoignon, and another good fellow who believed himself the successor of Le Nôtre, had turned it about, trimmed it, clipped it, bedizened it, preparing it for purposes of gallantry; nature had seized it again, had filled it with shadow, and had arranged it for purposes of love.

There was, too, in this solitude a heart which was quite ready. Love had only to show itself: there was here a temple composed of verdure, of grass, of moss, of the sighs of birds, of gentle shadows, of waving branches, and a soul formed of gentleness, of faith, of candor, of hope, of aspirations, and of illusions.

Cosette left the convent while still almost a child; she was but a little more than fourteen years of age, and she was "at the ungrateful age;" we have said, with the exception of her eyes, she seemed rather ugly than pretty; still she had no ungraceful feature, but she was awkward, thin, timid and bold at the same time, in short, a grown-up little girl.

Her education was finished; that is to say, she had been taught religion, and also, and above all, devotion; also "history," that is to say, the thing so called in a convent, geography, grammar, the participles, the kings of France, a little music, to draw a nose, etc., but in other respects she was ignorant of everything, which is at once a charm and a peril. The soul-mind of a young girl ought not to be left in darkness; for there will be produced in it later too sudden and too lively mirages as in a camera obscura. She should be gently and discreetly enlightened, rather by the reflection of realities than by their direct and harsh light.

This is a useful and gracefully obscure twilight that dissipates puerile fears and prevents falls. There is only the maternal instinct, that admirable intuition into which enter the recollections of the virgin and the experience of the wife, that knows how and of what this twilight should be composed. Nothing can take the place of this instinct. To form the soul of a young girl, not all the nuns in the world are equal to a mother.

Cosette had had no mother. She had only had many mothers, a plurality.

As for Jean Valjean, he had within him every possible tenderness and every anxiety; but he was only an old man who knew nothing at all.

Now, in this work of education, in this grave matter of the preparation of a woman for life, what knowledge is needed to contend against that vast ignorance which is called innocence!

Nothing prepares a girl for passions like the convent. The convent turns her thoughts in the direction of the unknown. The heart driven back on itself, digs into itself, is not able to expand itself. Hence come visions, suppositions, conjectures, romances outlined, adventures longed for, fantastic constructions, edifices built entirely on the inner darkness of the mind, gloomy and secret dwellings

in which the passions immediately find a lodging so soon as the surmounted gate permits them to enter. The convent is a compression which, to triumph over the human heart, must endure throughout a whole life.

On leaving the convent, Cosette could not have found anything sweeter and more dangerous than the house in the Rue Plumet. It was the continuation of solitude with the commencement of liberty; a closed garden, but a nature, acrimonious, rich, voluptuous, and sweet-smelling; there were the same dreams as in the convent, but glimpses could be caught of young men; there was a grating, but it looked on the street.

Still, we repeat it, when she first came here, she was but a child. Jean Valjean gave over to her this uncultivated garden. "Do what you like with it," he said to her. This amused Cosette; she moved all the tufts and all the stones, she searched there for "beasts;" she played there while waiting till the time came to think; she loved this garden for the sake of the insects which she found under her feet in the grass, while waiting till she should love it for the sake of the stars she could see through the branches above her head.

And then she loved her father, that is to say Jean Valjean, with all her soul, with a simple filial passion, which made out of a

worthy man a desired and delightful companion. Our readers will remember that M. Madeleine read a great deal, Jean Valjean continued it; he had learned to talk well; he possessed the secret wealth and the eloquence of an intelligence, humble and true, which had been self-cultivated. He had retained just sufficient ruggedness to season his goodness; he had a rough-hewn mind and a soft heart. In the Luxembourg, during their conversations, he gave her long explanations about all sorts of things, borrowing his information from what he had read, and also from what he had suffered. While listening to him the eyes of Cosette were vaguely wandering around.

This simple man was sufficient for Cosette's thoughts, in the same way as the wild garden was for her eyes. When she had chased the butterflies for a while, she would run up to him panting, and say: "Ah! how I have run!" He would then kiss her on the forehead.

Cosette adored this worthy man. She was ever at his heels. Wherever Jean Valjean was, there was happiness. As Jean Valjean did not inhabit either the pavilion, or the garden, she was more attached to the paved back-yard than to the enclosure full of flowers, and to the little outhouse furnished with straw chairs than to the large drawing-room hung with tapestry, where silk-covered chairs stood

back to back. Jean Valjean said to her sometimes, with the smile of a man delighted to be teased: "Come, go to your own rooms! leave me at peace for a little while!"

She gave him those charming tender scoldings which are so graceful when addressed by a daughter to her father:

"Father, I am very cold in your room; why don't you have here a carpet and a stove?"

"Dear child, there are so many persons who are more deserving than I and they have not even a roof over their heads."

"Then, why is there fire in my room and everything that I want?"

"Because you are a woman and a child."

"Bah! then men are obliged to be cold and to be ill?"

"Some men."

"That's good, I'll come here so often that you will be obliged to have a fire."

She said to him another time:

"Father, why do you eat such nasty bread as that?"

"Because . . . my daughter."

"Well, if you eat it, I shall eat it, too."

So, that Cosette might not eat black bread, Jean Valjean ate white bread.

Cosette only remembered her childhood confusedly. She prayed morning and night for her mother whom she had never known.

The Thénardiers were left behind like two hideous beings seen in a dream. She merely remembered that she had gone "one day, at night" to fetch water in a wood. She thought that it was very far off from Paris. It seemed to her as if she had commenced life in an abyss, and that it was Jean Valjean who had drawn her out of it. Her childhood produced on her the effect of a time when she had had around her nothing but centipedes, spiders, and snakes. When she mused at nighttime, before she fell asleep, as she had no very clear idea of being the daughter of Jean Valjean, and that he was her father, she imagined that the soul of her mother had passed into this good man, and had come to dwell near her.

When he was sitting down, she rested her cheek on his white hair, and silently dropped a tear, while saying to herself, "Perhaps this man is my mother!"

Cosette, strange as it is to say so, in the profound ignorance of a girl educated in a convent, and as maternity in others is absolutely unintelligible to virginity, eventually pictured to herself that she had had as little of a mother as was possible. This mother, she did not even know her name. Every time that she spoke to Jean Valjean on the subject, Jean Valjean kept silence. If she repeated

her question, he answered by a smile. Once she insisted; the smile terminated in a tear.

This silence of Jean Valjean cast a night over Fantine.

Was it prudence? was it respect? was it fear to intrust this name to the hazards of another memory besides his own?

So long as Cosette was young, Jean Valjean had readily talked to her about her mother; when she became a young woman, this became impossible to him. He felt as if he no longer dared to do it. Was it on account of Cosette? Was it on account of Fantine? He felt a species of religious horror to let this shadow enter Cosette's thoughts, and to render the dead woman a third person in their life. The more sacred this shade was to him, the more formidable it appeared to him. He thought of Fantine, and felt himself overwhelmed by silence. He saw vaguely in the darkness something that resembled a finger laid on a lip. Had all the modesty which was in Fantine, and which, during her life, came out of her violently, had this returned after death had swooped over her, to watch, indignantly, over the dead woman's peace, and, sternly to guard her in the tomb? Was Jean Valjean, unwittingly, himself oppressed by it? We who believe in death, we are not of those who are prepared to reject this mysterious explana-

tion. Hence arose the impossibility of pronouncing, even to Cosette, this name: Fantine.

One day Cosette said to him:

"Father, I saw last night my mother in a dream. She had two large wings. My mother in her life must have been a sainted woman."

"Through martyrdom," responded Jean Valjean.

Still, Jean Valjean was happy.

When Cosette went out with him she leaned on his arm, proud, happy, in the fulness of her heart. Jean Valjean, at all these marks of a tenderness so exclusive and so satisfied with himself alone, felt his thoughts melt into delight. The poor wretch trembled, inundated with an angelic joy; he assured himself with transport that this would endure throughout his whole life; he said to himself that he had not truly suffered enough to merit such radiant happiness, and he thanked God, in the depths of his soul, for having permitted him, wicked wretch as he was, to be thus loved by this innocent being.

V.

THE ROSE PERCEIVES THAT SHE IS AN IMPLEMENT OF WAR

One day Cosette happened to look at herself in the glass, and said to herself: "Good gracious!" She fancied that she was almost pretty. This threw her into a singular trouble. Up to this moment she had not thought of her face. She had seen herself in her mirror, but she had not studied herself. And, then, she had often been told that she was ugly; Jean Valjean alone would say gently: "Oh no, oh no!" However this might be, Cosette had always believed herself ugly, and had grown up in this idea with the facile resignation of childhood. Now all at once her looking-glass said to her, as Jean Valjean had done: "Oh, no!" She did not sleep that night. "Suppose I were pretty?" thought she, "how droll it would be if I were pretty!" And she remembered those of her companions whose beauty produced an effect in the convent, and she said to herself: "What! I might be like Mademoiselle So-and-so!"

The next day she looked at herself, but not haphazardly, and she doubted: "Where was my sense?" said she, "no, I am ugly." She had simply slept badly, she had heavy eyes and she was pale. She had not felt very joyous the previous day in believing in her beauty, but she was sad at no longer believing it. She did not look at herself any more, and for more than fifteen days she tried to dress her hair with her back to the mirror.

In the evening, after dinner, she usually worked at her embroidery in the drawing-room, or at some piece of work for the convent, and Jean Valjean read by her side. Once she raised her eyes from her work, and was completely surprised at the anxious way in which her father was gazing at her.

Another time she was walking along the street, and it seemed to her she heard some one behind her, whom she did not see, say: "A pretty woman! but badly dressed." "Nonsense!" thought she; "it is not I. I am well dressed and ugly." At that time she wore her plush bonnet and her merino dress.

One day, at last, she was in the garden, and she overheard the poor old Toussaint who said: "Monsieur, have you remarked how pretty our young lady is growing?" Cosette did not overhear what her father replied, the

words of Toussaint were a sort of shock to her. She escaped from the garden, went up to her room, ran to the glass, in which she had not looked at herself for three months, and uttered a cry. She had dazzled herself.

She was beautiful and pretty; she could not refrain from being of the opinion of Toussaint and of her looking-glass. Her shape was formed, her skin was white, her hair was glossy, an unknown splendor was lit up in her blue eyes. The consciousness of her beauty wholly possessed her, in a minute, like the sudden dawn of day, others, besides, noticed her, Toussaint said so, it was evidently of herself that the passer-by had spoken, there was no longer any doubt; she redescended into the garden, believing herself a queen, hearing the birds sing, though it was winter, seeing the golden sky, the sun amid the trees, the flowers on the shrubs, she was distraught, mad, in a state of ineffable ravishment.

On his side, Jean Valjean experienced a profound and indefinable anguish of the heart.

In truth, for some time past, he had contemplated with terror this beauty which appeared every day more radiant in the sweet face of Cosette. It was a laughing dawn for all, mournful for him.

Cosette had been beautiful for a long time

before she perceived it. But, from the first day, this unexpected light which slowly rose and enveloped by degrees the girl's entire person wounded the sombre eyes of Jean Valjean. He felt that it was a change in a happy life, so happy, that he did not dare stir in it, for fear of deranging it somewhere. This man, who had passed through every possible distress, who was still bleeding all over from the bruises of his destiny, who had been almost wicked, and who had become almost a saint, who, after having dragged the chain of the galleys, was now dragging the invisible but weighty chain of indefinite infamy, this man whom the law had not liberated, and who might at any moment be recaptured and returned from the obscurity of virtue to the broad daylight of public opprobrium, this man accepted everything, excused everything, pardoned everything, blessed everything, wished everything well, and only asked of Providence, of men, of the laws, of society, of nature, of the world, one thing, that Cosette should love him!

That Cosette might continue to love him! that God would not prevent the heart of this child turning to him, and remaining with him! Loved by Cosette, he felt healed, at rest, appeased, overwhelmed, recompensed, crowned. Loved by Cosette, all was well!

He asked no more. Had anyone said to him: "Would you like to be better off?" He would have answered: "No." Had God said to him: "Do you wish for heaven?" he would have answered: "I should lose by it."

All that could affect this situation, even on the surface, made him tremble as the beginning of something else. He had never known thoroughly what was the beauty of a woman; but, by instinct, he comprehended that it was terrible.

This beauty, which expanded more and more, triumphant and superb by his side, under his eye, upon the ingenuous and formidable brow of the child, from the depth of his ugliness, of his old age, of his misery, of his reprobation, of his despondency, scared him as he watched it.

He said to himself: "How beautiful she is! what will become of me?"

Here nevertheless was the difference between his tenderness and the tenderness of a mother. What he saw with anguish a mother would have seen with joy.

The first symptoms were not slow in manifesting themselves.

From the morrow of the day when Cosette said to herself: "Decidedly I am good looking!" Cosette paid attention to her toilet. She remembered the remark of the passer-by:

"Pretty, but badly dressed,"—a blast of the oracle which had passed beside her and had died out, after depositing in her heart one of those two germs which later are destined to occupy a woman's entire life, coquettishness. Love is the other.

With faith in her beauty, all her feminine soul expanded itself within her. She had a horror of merinos, and a shame of plush. Her father never refused her anything. She knew at once the whole science of the hat, of the dress, of the mantle, of the shoe, of the cuff, of the fabric that suits, of the color that is becoming, that science which makes the Parisian woman something so charming, so profound, and so dangerous. The expression *femme capiteuse* was invented for the Parisian.

In less than a month the little Cosette was in this Thebaïs of the Rue de Babylone, not only one of the prettiest women, which is something, but one of "the best dressed" in Paris, which is a great deal more. She would have liked to meet "her passer-by," to see what he would say, and "to teach him a lesson!" The fact is, that she was in every respect ravishing, and could distinguish to a marvel a bonnet of Gerard from a hat of Herbaut.

Jean Valjean regarded these ravages with anxiety. He felt that he could never do more

than crawl or walk at the most, he could see wings growing on Cosette.

However, by the simple inspection of Cosette's toilet, a woman would have seen that she had no mother. Certain small proprieties, certain social conventionalisms were not observed by Cosette. A mother, for instance, would have told her that a maiden does not wear brocade.

The first day that Cosette went out in her dress and her cloak of black brocade, and her bonnet of white crape, she took the arm of Jean Valjean, gay, radiant, blushing, proud, striking. "Father," said she, "how do you think I look?" Jean Valjean replied, in a voice which resembled the bitter voice of an envious man: "Charming!" He was as usual during the walk. When he came home again he asked Cosette:

"Will you not put on that dress and bonnet again, you know which?"

This took place in Cosette's room. Cosette turned towards the peg of her wardrobe where her boarding-school dress was hanging up.

"That disguise!" said she. "Father, how can you wish me to do such a thing? Oh! indeed, no, I shall never put on those horrors again. With that thing on my head I look a regular mad-dog."

Jean Valjean sighed deeply.

From that moment he remarked that Cosette, who hitherto had always wished to stay at home, saying: "Father, I amuse myself better here with you," now constantly asked to go out. In truth, what good is it to have a pretty face and a delicious toilet, if one does not show them?

He noticed also that Cosette no longer had the same liking for the back-yard. At present she preferred remaining in the garden, where she walked, without displeasure, near the railings. Jean Valjean, morose, never set foot in the garden. He remained in the back-yard, like the dog.

Cosette, knowing herself beautiful, lost the grace of being ignorant of it; an exquisite grace, for beauty heightened by simplicity is ineffable, and nothing is so adorable as an innocent, transplendent maiden, who walks, holding in her hand, unconsciously, the key of a Paradise. But what she lost in ingenuous grace, she regained in a pensive and serious charm. Her whole person, impregnated with the joys of youth, of innocence, and of beauty, exhaled a splendid melancholy.

It was at this epoch that Marius, after a lapse of six months, saw her again at the Luxembourg.

VI.

THE BATTLE BEGINS

Cosette was in her shadow, as Marius was in his, all ready for the conflagration. Destiny, with its mysterious and fatal patience, slowly brought together these two beings, all charged with, and all pining in, the stormy electricity of passion, these two souls which bore love, as the clouds carry the thunder, and were destined to come together and be blended in a glance like the clouds in a lightning-flash.

Some have so abused the power of a glance in love-romances that in the end it has been discredited. It is hardly worth while to dare to assert now-a-days that two beings fell in love because they looked at each other. Yet that is the way, and the only way, in which people fall in love. The rest is merely the rest, and comes afterwards. Nothing is more real than the mighty shocks which two souls give each other by exchanging this spark.

At that very hour when Cosette unconsciously gave that glance which troubled

Marius, Marius did not suspect that he too gave a glance which troubled Cosette.

He caused the same evil and the same good.

For a long time she had seen and she had examined him in the way girls examine and see, while looking elsewhere. Marius was still thinking Cosette ugly, when already Cosette had considered Marius handsome. But as he paid no attention to her, this young man was an object of indifference to her.

Still she could not refrain from saying to herself that he had beautiful hair, beautiful eyes, beautiful teeth, a charming tone of voice, when she heard him talking with his companions, that he perhaps held himself badly when he walked, but with a grace of his own, that he did not appear at all silly, that his whole person was noble, gentle, simple, and proud, and, lastly, that though he had the air of a poor man, yet that he had the air of a gentleman.

On the day when their eyes met, and at length suddenly declared to each other the first obscure and ineffable things which the eye stammers, Cosette did not understand it at first. She returned pensive to the house in the Rue de l'Ouest, where Jean Valjean, according to his wont, had come to spend six weeks. The next day, when she awoke, she thought of the young stranger, so long indif-

ferent and cold, who now seemed to pay attention to her, and it did not appear to her that this attention was the least bit in the world agreeable to her. On the contrary, she felt rather a little anger against this handsome, disdainful man. A warlike feeling was aroused in her. It seemed to her, and she felt a very childish joy at it, that she was at length about to be avenged.

Knowing herself to be lovely, she well understood, though in an indistinct way, that she had a weapon. Women play with their beauty as boys do with their knife. They cut themselves with it.

Our readers will remember the hesitations of Marius, his palpitations, his terrors. He remained on his bench, and did not approach. This vexed Cosette. One day she said to Jean Valjean: "Father, suppose we take a walk in that direction." Seeing that Marius did not come to her, she went to him. In such cases, every woman resembles Mahomet. And then, it is a strange thing, the first symptom of true love in a young man is timidity, in a girl it is boldness. This is astonishing, yet nothing is more simple. The two sexes have a tendency to approach, and each assumes the qualities the one of the other.

This day Cosette's glance drove Marius mad, the glance of Marius made Cosette

tremble. Marius went away confiding, and Cosette disquieted. From this day forward they adored each other.

The first thing that Cosette experienced was a confused and profound sorrow. It seemed to her that in one day her soul had become black. She no longer recognized herself. The whiteness of the soul of maidens, which is composed of coldness and of gaiety, resembles the snow. It melts before love, which is its sun.

Cosette knew not what love was. She had never heard the word uttered in its earthly sense. In the books of profane music which entered into the convent, *amour* was replaced by *tambour* or *pandour*. This produced enigmas, which exercised the imagination of the *big girls*, such as: *Ah! how agreeable the drummer is!* or: *Pity is not a pandour!* But Cosette left the convent at too early an age to trouble herself much about the "drummer." She did not, then, know what name to give to that which now troubled her. But is it the less a disease because we are ignorant of the name of our disease?

She loved with the more passion, because she loved in ignorance. She did not know whether it is good or bad, useful or dangerous, necessary or mortal, eternal or transient, permitted or prohibited; she loved. She would have been greatly surprised if anyone had said

to her: "You do not sleep? why, that is forbidden! You do not eat? why, that is very wrong! You have oppressions and beatings of the heart? why, that cannot be tolerated! You blush and you turn pale when a certain person dressed in black appears at the end of a certain green walk? why, that is abominable!" She would not have comprehended, and she would have replied: "How can I be in fault in a matter in which I can do nothing, and of which I know nothing?"

It happened that the love which presented itself was precisely the one which agreed best with the state of her soul. It was a sort of distant adoration, a dumb contemplation, the deification of one unknown. It was the apparition of youth to youth, the dream of nights become a romance and remaining a dream, the wished-for phantom at length realized and incarnated, but as yet having no name, nor wrong, nor defect, nor exigency, nor blemish; in a word, a lover, remote and dwelling in an ideal, a chimera having a form. Any more palpable and nearer meeting would at this first stage have startled Cosette, who was still half plunged in the magnifying fog of the cloister. She had all the fears of children and all the fears of nuns mingled. The spirit of the convent, with which she had been impregnated for five years, was still slowly

evaporating from her whole person, and making everything tremble around her. In this situation, it was not a lover she wanted, it was a vision. She began to adore Marius as something charming, luminous, and impossible.

As extreme simplicity trenches on extreme coquetry, she smiled upon him, most frankly.

She awaited every day the hour for her walk with impatience, she found Marius there, she felt indescribably happy, and believed sincerely that she was expressing her every thought when she said to Jean Valjean: "What a delicious garden is the Luxembourg!"

Marius and Cosette existed in the night for each other. They did not speak, they did not bow, they did not know each other; they beheld each other; and, like the stars in the heavens, which are millions of leagues apart, they lived by looking at each other.

It is thus that Cosette became little by little a woman and was developed, beautiful and loving, conscious of her beauty and ignorant of her love. She was a coquette into the bargain, through innocence.

VII.

TO SADNESS, SADNESS AND A HALF

All situations have their instincts. The old and eternal mother Nature darkly warned Jean Valjean of the presence of Marius. Jean Valjean trembled in the lowest depth of his mind. Jean Valjean saw nothing, knew nothing, and yet regarded with an obstinate attention the darkness in which he was, as if he felt on one side something which was being built up, and on the other something which was crumbling away. Marius, who was also warned and, this is a profound law of our good God, by the same mother Nature, did all that he could to conceal himself from the "father." It came to pass however that Jean Valjean perceived him sometimes. The manner of Marius was no longer at all natural. He displayed ambiguous prudence and awkward temerity. He no longer came quite close to them, as formerly; he sat down at a distance, and remained in an ecstasy; he had a book, and made a pretence of reading it; why did he

make this pretence? Formerly he came in his old coat, now he came every day in his new coat; Jean Valjean was not quite sure whether he did not have his hair dressed, he had very strange eyes, he wore gloves; in short, Jean Valjean cordially detested this young man.

Cosette did not allow anything to be guessed. Without knowing exactly what was the matter with her, she had a feeling that there was something and that it must be hidden.

There was between the taste for dress which had come to Cosette, and the habit of wearing new clothes which was displayed by this stranger, a parallelism which troubled Jean Valjean. It was an accident, perhaps, without doubt, most certainly, but a menacing accident.

He never opened his mouth to Cosette about this stranger. One day, however, he could not restrain himself, and with that vague despair, which suddenly thrusts the probe into its own misfortune, he said to her: "That young man has the air of a pedant!"

Cosette, a year previously, when still an unconcerned little girl, would have responded: "Oh, no, he is charming." Ten years later, with the love of Marius in her heart, she would have replied: "A pedant and insufferable to look at! You are quite right!" At the period of her life and heart, where she then was, she

restricted herself to saying with a supreme calmness:

"That young man!"

As if she looked at him for the first time in her life.

"How stupid I am!" thought Jean Valjean. "She had not even noticed him. It is I who have pointed him out to her."

Oh, simplicity of old people! depth of children!

It is another law of these young years of suffering and of care, of these sharp struggles of first love with first obstacles, that the maiden cannot be caught in any snare, the young man falls into all. Jean Valjean commenced against Marius a secret war, which Marius, with the sublime stupidity of his passion and of his age, did not divine at all. Jean Valjean laid for him a crowd of snares; he changed the hours, he changed the bench, he forgot his handkerchief, he went alone to the Luxembourg; Marius went headlong into all these traps; and to all these notes of interrogation planted in the road by Jean Valjean, he ingenuously answered, "Yes." Cosette, however, remained immured in her apparent unconcern and in her imperturbable tranquility, so well that Jean Valjean arrived at this conclusion: "That booby is madly in love with Cosette, but Cosette does not even know that he exists."

He had, none the less, a painful tremor in his heart. The minute when Cosette would love might arrive at any instant. Does not all this commence with indifference?

Only once did Cosette commit a fault and startle him. He raised himself from his bench to go home after three hours' sitting, she said: "Already!"

Jean Valjean did not give up his walks in the Luxembourg, not wishing to do anything singular, and above all dreading to give the alarm to Cosette; but during the hours so sweet for the two lovers, while Cosette was sending her smile to the intoxicated Marius, who only perceived this, and now saw nothing else in the world than a radiant adored face, Jean Valjean fixed on Marius flashing and terrible eyes. To him who had ended by no longer believing himself capable of a malevolent feeling, there came moments, where, when Marius was there, he believed himself becoming again savage and ferocious, and those old depths of his soul which had formerly contained so much anger reopened and upheaved against this young man. It seemed to him almost as if unknown craters were formed again within him.

What! he was there, that fellow! What did he come to do? he came to interrogate, to sniff, to examine, to essay! he came to say:

hey? why not? he came to prowl around his happiness, to seize and carry it off!

Jean Valjean added: "Yes, that is it! what does he come to seek? an adventure! what does he want? a love-affair! A love-affair! and I! What! I was first the most miserable of men, and then the most unhappy, I have spent sixty years of my life on my knees, I have suffered all that a man can suffer, I have grown old without having been young, I have lived without family, without parents, without friends, without wife, without children, I have left some of my blood on every stone, on every bramble, on every milestone, along every wall, I have been gentle though men were harsh to me, and good though they were wicked, I have become an honest man, again, in spite of everything, I have repented of the evil I did, and I have pardoned the evil that was done to me, and at the moment when I am recompensed, at the moment when all is finished, at the moment when I have reached my mark, at the moment when I have what I wish, it is but right, it is but fair, I have paid for it, I have earned it, all this is to depart from me, all this is to fade away, and I am to lose Cosette, and I am to lose my life, my love, my joy, my soul, because it has pleased a big ninny to saunter about the Luxembourg!"

Then his eyeballs were filled with a mourn-

ful and extraordinary brilliancy. He was no longer a man who looked at a man; he was no longer an enemy who looked at an enemy. He was a house dog who watched a robber.

One knows the rest. Marius continued to act madly. One day he followed Cosette to the Rue de l'Ouest, another day he spoke to the porter. The porter in his turn spoke and said to Jean Valjean: "Monsieur, do you happen to know an inquisitive young man, who has been making inquiries about you?" The next day Jean Valjean gave Marius that glance of the eye which Marius at length noticed. Eight days later, Jean Valjean had removed. He swore that he would never again set foot either in the Luxembourg or in the Rue de l'Ouest. He returned to the Rue Plumet.

Cosette did not complain, she said nothing, she asked no questions, she did not attempt to discover any motive; she had already reached that period when one fears that her thoughts may be penetrated and she may betray herself. Jean Valjean had not had any experience of these miseries, the only ones which are charming and the only ones he did not know; on this account he did not at all comprehend the grave significance of the silence of Cosette. Only he remarked that she became sad, and

he became gloomy. Inexperiences were contending on both sides.

Once he made an essay. He said to Cosette:

"Will you go to the Luxembourg?"

A beam illumined the pale face of Cosette.

"Yes," said she.

They went there. Three months had elapsed. Marius no longer went there. Marius was not there.

The next day Jean Valjean again asked Cosette:

"Will you go to the Luxembourg?"

She answered sadly and gently:

"No."

Jean Valjean was hurt by the sadness, and heart-broken by the gentleness.

What was taking place in this mind so young and already so impenetrable? What was in train to be accomplished? what had happened to the soul of Cosette? Sometimes, instead of going to bed, Jean Valjean would remain seated by his pallet with his head in his hands, and he passed whole nights in asking himself: "What has Cosette on her mind?" and in thinking of the things of which she might be thinking.

Oh! at such moments, what sad glances he turned toward the convent, that chaste summit, that place of angels, that inaccessible glacier

of virtue! How did he contemplate with a despairing ravishment that convent garden, full of ignored flowers and of immured virgins, where all the perfumes and all the souls ascend direct to heaven! How he adored that Eden, now closed against him forever, which he had voluntarily and madly left! How he regretted his self-denial and his insanity in having brought Cosette back to the world, himself the poor hero of the sacrifice, seized and hurled down by his own devotion! How he said to himself: "What have I done?"

However, nothing of this was exhibited towards Cosette. Neither temper, nor roughness. It was ever the same serene and kind face. The manner of Jean Valjean was more tender and more paternal than ever. If anything could have shown that he was less joyous, it was his greater gentleness.

On her side, Cosette languished. She suffered from the absence of Marius as she had revelled in his presence, singularly, without knowing exactly why. When Jean Valjean had ceased taking her for her usual walks, a feminine instinct had confusingly whispered at the bottom of her heart that she must not appear to be attached to the Luxembourg, and that if she displayed indifference in the matter, her father would take her back to it. But days,

weeks, and months, succeeded each other. Jean Valjean had tacitly accepted the tacit consent of Cosette. She regretted it. It was too late. The day when she returned to the Luxembourg, Marius was no longer there. Marius had disappeared then; it was all over, what could she do? would she never meet him again? She felt a contraction of the heart which nothing dilated and which increased each day; she no longer knew if it were winter or summer, sunshine or rain, whether the birds were singing, whether it was the season for dahlias or for daisies, whether the Luxembourg was more charming than the Tuileries, whether the linen which the washerwoman brought home was too much or insufficiently starched, or if Toussaint had done "her marketing" well or ill, and she remained crushed, absorbed, attentive to one thought alone, her eye vague and fixed, like a person gazing at night through the darkness at the black and profound spot where a phantom has vanished.

Still she did not allow anything to be seen by Jean Valjean, but her pallor. She kept for him a gentle face.

This pallor was more than sufficient though to render Jean Valjean anxious. At times he would ask her:

"What is the matter with you?"

She responded:

"Nothing is the matter with me."

And after a silence, as if divining that he was sad too, she would add:

"And you, father, is there anything the matter with you?"

"With me? Nothing," said he.

These two beings, who had loved each other so exclusively, and one of them with such a touching love, and who had lived for a long time the one through the other, were now suffering the one by the side of the other, the one for the sake of the other, without confessing it, without harsh feeling, and with a smile.

VIII.

THE CHAIN-GANG

The more unhappy of the two, was Jean Valjean. Youth, even in its sorrow, has always a brilliancy of its own.

At certain moments Jean Valjean suffered so intensely that he became puerile. It is the peculiarity of grief to bring out the childish side of a man. He felt invincibly that Cosette was slipping away from him. He would have liked to wrestle, to hold her back, to enrapture her by something external and brilliant. These ideas, puerile, as we have said, but at the same time senile, gave him, through their very childishness, a notion, almost accurate, of the influence of lace-work upon the imagination of girls. He happened one day to see passing along the street a general on horseback, in full-dress uniform, the Count Coutard, Commandant of Paris. He envied this gilded man; he said to himself, "What a happiness it would be to be able to put on that coat which was an incontestable thing, so

that if Cosette saw him in it it would dazzle her, so that when he gave his arm to Cosette and he passed before the gates of the Tuileries, the sentinels would present arms to him, and that would be sufficient for Cosette, and would remove from her the idea of looking at young men."

An unexpected shock was mingled with these sad thoughts.

In the isolated life they led, and since they had gone to reside in the Rue Plumet, they had one habit. They sometimes made it a matter of pleasure to go to see the sun rise, a species of sweet joy, which is agreeable to those who are entering life and those who are leaving it.

To walk about at daybreak, to one who loves solitude, is equivalent to walking about at night, with the gaiety of nature added. The streets are deserted and the birds sing. Cosette, herself a bird, generally woke at the proper time. These morning excursions were arranged over-night. He proposed, she accepted. This was arranged like a plot, they went out before day, and it was a little pleasure for Cosette. These innocent eccentricities please youth.

The inclination of Jean Valjean was, as we know, to go to places but little frequented, to solitary nooks, to forgotten spots. There were

at that time, in the vicinity of the barrières of Paris, a sort of poor fields, almost forming part of the city, where sickly wheat grew in summer, and which in autumn, after the harvest was got in, did not look as if they had been reaped, but skinned. Jean Valjean frequented these by predilection. Cosette did not feel wearied there. It was solitude for him, liberty for her. There, she became a little girl again, she could run about and almost play, she took off her hat, laid it on the knees of Jean Valjean, and gathered nosegays. She watched the butterflies upon the flowers, but did not catch them; tenderness and sensibility are born with love, and the maiden, who has within her a trembling and fragile ideal, feels pity for the wing of the butterfly. She twined poppies into wreaths which she placed on her head, and which stricken and pervaded by sunshine, empurpled them almost flamingly, forming for her fresh pink face a fiery crown.

Even after their life had grown saddened, they kept up their habit of early walks.

One October morning, then, tempted by the perfect serenity of the autumn of 1831, they went out, and found themselves just before daybreak near the Barrière du Maine. It was not quite morning, it was dawn; a ravishing and wild minute. There were a few stars here and there in the pale and profound

azure sky, the earth was all black, the heaven all white, a shiver ran along the blades of grass, everywhere there was the mysterious influence of twilight. A lark, which seemed mingled with the stars, was singing at a prodigious height, and it might have been said that this hymn of littleness to infinitude calmed the immensity. In the east, the Val-de-Grâce stood out, against the bright steel blue horizon, an obscure mass; glittering Venus rose behind the dome and had the air of a soul escaping from a gloomy edifice.

All was peace and silence; there was no one on the road; in the distance a few workmen, could be indistinctly seen, going to their work.

Jean Valjean was seated in the side-walk on some timber-work deposited at the gate of a timber-yard. He had his face turned to the road, and his back to the light; he forgot all about the sunrise; he had fallen into one of those profound absorptions in which the mind is concentrated, which imprisons even the glance and is equivalent to four walls. There are some meditations which ought to be called wells; when you are at the bottom it takes some time to reach the earth again. Jean Valjean had descended into one of these reveries. He was thinking of Cosette, of the possible happiness if nothing came betwixt

him and her, of that light with which she had filled his life, a light which was the breath of his soul. He was almost happy in this reverie. Cosette, standing by his side, was watching the clouds become ruddy.

All at once Cosette cried out: "Father, there is some one coming down there." Jean Valjean raised his eyes.

Cosette had cause.

The road which leads to the ancient Barrière du Maine is a prolongation, as we know, of the Rue de Sèvres, and is intersected at right angles by the inner boulevard. At the elbow of the road and of the boulevard, at the point where it branches off, could be heard a sound difficult to explain at such an hour, and a sort of confused mass appeared. Some shapeless thing which was coming from the boulevard was turning into the main road.

It grew larger, and seemed to be moving in an orderly way, although it shook and heaved; it seemed to be a vehicle, but its load could not be distinguished. There were horses, wheels, shouts; the whips cracked. By degrees the lineaments became fixed, though drowned in darkness. It was a vehicle, in truth, which was turning out of the boulevard into the main-road and was being driven toward the barrière near which Jean Valjean was seated;

a second, resembling it, followed, then a third, then a fourth ; seven carts debouched in turn, the heads of the horses touched the backs of the vehicles. Silhouettes moved on these carts, sparks could be seen in the gloom, looking like bare sabres, a clang could be heard resembling chains being shaken, all this advanced, the voices became louder, and it was a formidable thing such as issues from the cavern of dreams.

On drawing nearer this thing took form and stood out behind the trees with the lividness of an apparition ; the mass whitened ; the day which dawned little by little threw a wan gleam over this crawling thing, which was at once sepulchral and living, the heads of the silhouettes became the faces of corpses, and this is what it was :

Seven vehicles were moving in file along the road. The first six had a singular shape. They resembled coopers' drays ; and consisted of a sort of long ladder laid upon two wheels, and forming a shaft at the front extremity. Each dray, or to speak more correctly, each ladder, was drawn by four horses in single file. Upon these ladders were dragged along strange clusters of men. In the faint light of the morning these men could not be seen, they were divined. Twenty-four on each cart, twelve on either side, leaning against each

other, their faces turned to the passers-by, their legs hanging down, these men were traveling on; and they had behind their back something which rang, and was a chain, and something that glistened, and was a collar. Each man had his collar, but the chain was for all; so that these twenty-four men, if obliged to get down from the dray and walk, were seized by a species of inexorable unity, and were obliged to wriggle on the ground with the chain as a back-bone, not very unlike centipedes. At the front and at the back of each cart, stood two men armed with guns, which they held upright, each having one of the extremities of the chain under his feet. The collars were square. The seventh vehicle, a vast fourgon, with rack sides but no hood, had four wheels and six horses, and carried a resounding heap of iron boilers, cast-iron pots, chafing-dishes and chains, among which were mingled a few men bound and lying at full length, who seemed to be ill. This fourgon, which was quite open, was lined with dilapidated hurdles, which seemed to have served for old punishments.

These vehicles kept to the middle of the causeway. On the two sides marched a double file of guards of infamous appearance, wearing three-cornered hats like the soldiers of the Directory, stained, with holes, sordid,

mimicries of the uniforms of the Invalides, and of the trousers of hearse-boys half gray and blue, almost in tatters, with red epaulettes, yellow belts, and armed with short sabres, muskets, and cudgels; true specimens of blackguard soldiers. These sbirri seemed compounded of the abjectness of the beggar and of the authority of the executioner. The one who appeared their chief held in his hands a postilion's whip. All these details, half concealed in the dawn, grew more and more distinct in the advancing daylight. At the head and rear of the train, marched mounted gendarmes, sedate, with drawn sabres.

The train was so long that, at the moment when the first vehicle reached the barrière, the last had scarce turned out of the boulevard.

A crowd, which came no one knew whence, and formed in the twinkling of an eye, as is so frequent in Paris, lined the two sides of the road, and looked on. In the neighboring lanes could be heard the shouts of people calling to each other, and the wooden shoes of the kitchen-gardeners running up to have a peep.

The men piled upon the drays allowed themselves to be jolted in silence. They were livid with the morning chill. They all had canvas trousers and naked feet thrust into wooden shoes. The rest of their attire was left to the fancy of wretchedness. Their ac-

coutrements were hideously discordant; nothing is more melancholy than the harlequin garb of rags. There were stove-in old hats, oilskin caps, frightful woolen night-caps, and, side by side with the monkey-jacket, an out-at-elbow black coat; some wore women's bonnets; others had baskets, as head-gear; hairy chests were visible, and through the rents of the clothes could be distinguished tattooings, temples of love, burning hearts, cupids. You could also perceive skin-eruptions and unhealthy red spots. Two or three had fixed a straw rope through the side rail of the dray, and hanging down below them like a stirrup it supported their feet. One of them held in his hand and carried to his mouth something that had the appearance of a black stone, and which he seemed to gnaw; it was some bread he was eating. All their eyes were dry, and either dull or luminous with a wicked light. The escort troop cursed, the chained men did not breathe a syllable; from time to time could be heard the noise of a blow from a stick on shoulder-blades or upon heads; some of these men yawned; the rags were terrible; their feet hung down, their shoulders oscillated, their heads knocked against each other, their irons rattled, their eyeballs flashed ferociously, their fists clenched, or opened inertly like the hands of the dead; in the rear of the

convoy a troop of children were bursting with laughter.

This file of vehicles, whatever its nature might be, was lugubrious. It was plain that to-morrow, that within an hour, a shower might fall, that it might be followed by another, and then another, and that the ragged garments would be drenched, that once wet through, these men would not dry again, and once chilled, they would never grow warm any more, that their canvas trousers would be glued by the shower to their bones, that the water would fill their wooden shoes, that lashes of the whip could not prevent the chattering of teeth, that the chain would continue to hold them by the neck, that their feet would continue to dangle; and that it was impossible not to shudder on seeing these human creatures thus bound and passive beneath the cold clouds of autumn, and delivered over to the rain, to the north wind, to all the furies of the atmosphere, like trees and like stones.

The blows from the cudgel were not even spared the sick, who lay bound with ropes and without movement in the seventh vehicle, and who seemed to have been thrown down there like sacks full of misery.

All at once the sun appeared; the immense radiance of the East flashed out, and it seemed as if it set fire to all these ferocious heads.

Tongues became untied; and a conflagration of malicious laughs, of oaths, and of songs exploded. The wide horizontal light cut in two the whole file, illumining the heads and the trunks, leaving the feet and the wheels in obscurity. Thoughts appeared upon faces; the moment was frightful; visible demons, with their masks thrown away, ferocious souls absolutely naked. Illumined, this rabble remained tenebrous. Some of them, the gay ones, had in their mouths the barrels of quills through which they blew vermin on the crowd, selecting women; the dawn caused their lamentable faces to stand out in the darkness of the shadows; not one of these beings but was deformed through misery; and it was so monstrous that it might be said, to have changed the light of the sun into a gleam of lightning. The cargo which opened the procession struck up, and droned with all their might and a haggard joviality, a potpourri of Désaugiers, at that time famous, *La Vestale;* the trees shook mournfully; while in the side-walks bourgeois countenances were listening with an idiotic beatitude to these broad jests chanted by spectres.

Every affliction could be found in this chaos of a cortège; there were there the facial angles of all beasts, old men, youths, naked skulls, gray beards, cynical monstrosities, currish resignations, savage grins, insane attitudes,

piggish noses almost hidden under their caps, instances of heads of young girls with cork-screw curls on their temples, infantine countenances, and for that reason horrible, and meagre countenances of skeletons, which only lacked death. There could be seen on the first dray, a negro, who, probably, had been a slave, and was enabled to compare the chains. The frightful leveller, shame, had passed over these foreheads; at this stage of abasement, the last transformations were undergone by all in the lowest depths; and ignorance, changed into dullness, was the equal of intelligence changed into despair. No choice was possible among these men, who appeared to be the pick of the mud. It was clear that the arranger of this impure procession had not attempted to classify them. These beings had been bound and coupled pell-mell, probably in alphabetical disorder, and loaded hap-hazard on the vehicles. Still, horrors when grouped always end by disengaging a resultant; every addition to wretched men produces a total; there issued from each chain a common soul, and each dray-load had its physiognomy. By the side of him who sang was one who yelled; a third begged; another could be seen who gnashed his teeth; another threatened the passers-by, another blasphemed God; the last was silent as the tomb. Dante would

have believed that he saw the seven circles of hell on the march.

It was the march of the damned to torture, performed in a sinister way, not upon the formidable flashing car of the Apocalypse, but, more gloomy still, in the hangman's cart.

One of the guards, who had a hook at the end of his club, attempted from time to time to stir up this heap of human ordure. An old woman in the crowd pointed them out with her finger to a little boy of five years of age, and said to him: *Whelp, that will teach you!*

As the songs and blasphemy grew louder, the man who seemed the captain of the escort cracked his whip, and, at this signal, a frightful cudgelling, cracking and blind, which sounded like the noise of hail, fell upon the seven cart-loads; many roared and foamed at the lips; this but redoubled the joy of the gamins who had flocked around, like a cloud of flies upon sores.

The eye of Jean Valjean had become frightful. It was no longer an eyeball; it was that profound glass bulb which takes the place of the eye in some unfortunates, which seems unconscious of reality, and in which flashes the reflection of horrors and catastrophes. He was not looking at a spectacle; he was going through a vision. He wanted to rise, fly, escape; he could not move a foot. Sometimes

things that you see seize you and clinch you. He remained riveted, petrified, stupid, asking himself, through a confused inexpressible anguish, what was the signification of this sepulchral persecution, and whence came this Pandemonium that pursued him. All at once he raised his hand to his forehead, the habitual gesture of those to whom memory suddenly returns; he remembered that this was the itinerary, in truth, that this détour was usual to avoid any meeting with royalty, which was always possible on the Fontainebleau road, and that, thirty-five years before, he had passed through this barrière.

Cosette was none the less horrified, though in a different way. She did not comprehend it; her breath failed her; that which she saw did not appear to her possible; at length she cried:

"Father! what can there be in those vehicles?"

Jean Valjean answered:

"Some convicts."

"Where are they going?"

"To the galleys."

At this moment the cudgelling, multiplied by a hundred hands, became tremendous, strokes of the flat of the sabre were mingled with it, it resembled a rabies of whips and of cudgels; the galley-slaves crouched down, a hideous

obedience was produced by the punishment, and all were silent, with the looks of chained wolves. Cosette trembled in all her limbs; she replied:

"Father, can it be that they are still men?"

"Sometimes," said the wretched man.

It was, in fact, the Chain, which, leaving Bicêtre before daybreak, was taking the Mans road, to avoid Fontainebleau, where at that time was the king. This détour made the fearful journey last three or four days longer; but, to spare to a royal personage the sight of such punishment, it was surely good to prolong it.

Jean Valjean went home crushed. Such encounters are shocks and the recollections they leave behind resemble a concussion.

Consequently Jean Valjean, in regaining with Cosette the Rue de Babylone did not notice that she asked him other questions on the subject of what they had happened to see; perhaps he was himself too absorbed in his despondency to notice her words and to answer her. Only at night, as Cosette left him to go to bed, he heard her say in a low voice, and as if speaking to herself: "It seems to me that if I were to meet in my way one of those men, oh, my God, I should die only from seeing him so close!"

Luckily it happened that the next day after this tragic interlude there were, on account of

I know not now what official solemnity, some fêtes in Paris, a review at the Champs de Mars, rowing matches on the Seine, theatricals in the Champs Elysées, fireworks at the Etoile, illuminations everywhere. Jean Valjean, doing violence to his habits, took Cosette to these rejoicings, in order to make her forget the scene of the previous day, and to efface, beneath the laughing tumult of all Paris, the abominable thing which had passed before her. The review, which enlivened the fête, rendered the circulation of uniforms very natural; Jean Valjean put on his coat of the National Guard with the vague interior feeling of a man who seeks a refuge. However, the object of this walk seemed to be attained. Cosette, who made it a law to please her father, and to whom besides every spectacle was a novelty, accepted the distraction with the easy and light good-will of adolescence, and did not make too disdainful a pout at the platter of joy which is called a public fête; hence Jean Valjean might believe that he had succeeded, and that there remained no trace of the hideous vision.

A few days after, one morning, when the sun was shining, and they were both on the flight of steps leading into the garden—another infraction of the rules which Jean Valjean seemed to have imposed on himself,

and that habit of remaining in her chamber which sadness had caused Cosette to adopt, —Cosette, in a dressing-gown, was standing, in that négligé of the first hour of the day which adorably envelopes maidens, and looks like a cloud over a star; and, with her head in the light, rosy from having slept well, gazed at softly by the tender old man, was stripping off the leaves of a daisy. Cosette was ignorant of the ravishing legend, *I love you a little, passionately*, etc.; who could have taught it to her? She handled the flower, instinctively, innocently, without suspecting that plucking to pieces a daisy is examining a heart. If there were a fourth Grace called Melancholy, when smiling she had the air of that Grace. Jean Valjean was fascinated by the contemplation of these little fingers on this flower, forgetting everything in the radiance the child possessed. A red-breast was twittering in a bush hard by. White clouds crossed the sky so gayly that you might have said that they had just been set at liberty. Cosette continued to pluck her flower attentively; she seemed to be thinking of something; but that something must be charming; all at once she turned her head on her shoulder, with the delicate slowness of a swan, and said to Jean Valjean: "Father, what are they then, those galley-slaves?"

BOOK FOUR

SUCCOR FROM BELOW MAY BE SUCCOR FROM ON HIGH

I.

A WOUND WITHOUT, A CURE WITHIN

Their life thus became overcast by degrees.

There only remained for them one distraction, which had formerly been a happiness, that was to carry bread to those who were starving and clothes to those who were cold. In these visits to the poor, in which Cosette often accompanied Jean Valjean, they found again some portion of their old expansiveness; and, at times, when the day had been good, when a good deal of distress had been relieved, and many children were reanimated and made warm again, Cosette, in the evening, displayed a little gayety. It was at this period that they paid the visit to Jondrette's den.

The day after that visit, Jean Valjean appeared in the morning at the pavilion, calm as usual, but with a large wound in his left arm, very inflamed, very venomous, that resembled a burn, and which he accounted for in some fashion. This wound kept him at

home for more than a month with a fever. He would not see any medical man. When Cosette pressed him: "Call in the dog-doctor," said he.

Cosette dressed the wound morning and evening with an air so divine and such an angelic happiness at being useful to him, that Jean Valjean felt all his old joy return to him, his fears and anxieties dissipated, and he gazed at Cosette, saying: "Oh! the excellent wound! Oh! the good evil!"

Cosette, seeing her father ill, had deserted the pavilion, and had regained her taste for the little outhouse and the back court. She passed nearly the whole day by the side of Jean Valjean, and read to him the books he chose. In general, they were books of travels. Jean Valjean was regenerated; his happiness returned with ineffable radiance; the Luxembourg, the young unknown prowler, the coldness of Cosette, all these clouds of her soul were effaced. He found himself saying: "I have imagined all that. I am an old fool."

His happiness was such that the frightful discovery of the Thénardiers, made in the Jondrette den, which was so unexpected, had to some extent glided over him. He had succeeded in escaping, his trail was lost, and what did he care for the rest! he only thought about it to

pity those wretches. They were in prison, and henceforth not in a condition to injure him, thought he, but what a lamentable family in distress!

As for the hideous vision of the Barrière du Maine, Cosette had not again spoken of it.

In the convent Sister Sainte-Mechtilde had taught Cosette music. Cosette had a voice such as a linnet would have if it possessed a soul, and sometimes of an evening, in the humble lodging of the wounded man, she sang some plaintive songs, which delighted Jean Valjean.

The spring arrived, the garden was so admirable at that season of the year, that Jean Valjean said to Cosette: "You never go out, I wish you to take a stroll." "As you please, father," said Cosette.

And, to obey her father, she resumed her walks in the garden, most often alone, for, as we have indicated, Jean Valjean, who, probably was afraid of being seen from the grating, hardly ever came there.

The wound of Jean Valjean had been a diversion.

When Cosette saw that her father suffered less, and that he was recovering, and that he seemed happy, she felt a contentment which she did not even notice, to such a degree did it come softly and naturally. Then, too, it

was the month of March, the days were drawing out, the winter was departing, the winter always takes with it some portion of our sorrows; then came April, that daybreak of summer, fresh as every dawn, gay as all childhoods; a little tearful at times as the newborn babe that it is. Nature in that month has charming beams which pass from the sky, the clouds, the trees, the fields, and the flowers, into the heart of man.

Cosette was still too young for this joy of April, which resembled but did not penetrate her. Insensibly, and without suspecting it, the darkness departed from her spirit. In spring there is light in sad souls, as at midday it becomes light in cellars. Cosette was no longer so very sad. Moreover, thus it was, but she did not attempt to account for it. In the morning, about ten o'clock, after breakfast, when she succeeded in drawing her father for a quarter of an hour into the garden, and when she had walked him in the sun before the steps, while supporting his bad arm, she did not notice that she laughed every moment and that she was happy.

Jean Valjean, elated, saw her becoming again ruddy-cheeked and fresh.

"Oh! the blessed wound!" repeated he, in a low voice.

And he was grateful to the Thénardiers.

So soon as his wound was cured he recommenced his solitary night-rambles.

It would be an error to suppose that anyone can walk about alone in the uninhabited regions of Paris without meeting with some adventure.

II.

MOTHER PLUTARCH IS NOT EMBARRASSED TO ACCOUNT FOR A PHENOMENON

One evening the little Gavroche had eaten nothing; he remembered that he had not dined either on the previous day; that was becoming tiresome. He formed the resolution to try and sup. He went prowling about beyond the Salpêtrière, in the deserted spots; it is there there are windfalls; where there is nobody, one may find something. He thus reached a suburb which seemed to him to be the village of Austerlitz.

In one of his previous strolls, he had remarked there an old garden frequented by an old man and by an old woman, and in this garden a passable apple-tree. By the side of the apple-tree there was a sort of a badly-closed fruit-loft, whence an apple might be obtained. An apple is a supper; an apple is life. That which ruined Adam might save Gavroche. The garden skirted a solitary lane, unpaved and bordered by shrubs, while waiting for houses; a hedge separated it.

Gavroche directed himself toward the garden, he found the lane again, he recognized the apple-tree, he verified the fruit-loft, he examined the hedge; a hedge is but a stride. The day was declining, there was not a cat in the lane, the hour was good. Gavroche sketched out the escalade, then he stopped short. Some people were talking in the garden. Gavroche looked through one of the openings of the hedge.

At two paces from him, at the foot of the hedge, and on the other side, precisely at the point where would have opened the hole he was meditating, there was a stone laid, which formed a species of bench, and on this bench was seated the old man of the garden with the old woman standing in front of him. The old woman was grumbling. Gavroche, little discreet, listened.

"Monsieur Mabeuf!" said the old woman.

"Mabeuf," thought Gavroche, "that name's a joke."

The old man thus addressed did not stir. The old woman repeated:

"Monsieur Mabeuf!"

The old man, without taking his eyes off the ground, resolved to answer:

"What, Mother Plutarch?"

"Mother Plutarch!" thought Gavroche, "another rum name."

Mother Plutarch continued, and the old gentleman was compelled to take up the conversation.

"The landlord is not satisfied."

"Why so?"

"There are three quarters owing."

"In three months more we shall owe him four."

"He says that he will turn you out."

"I will go."

"The greengrocer wants to be paid. She will supply no more fire-wood. How will you warm yourself this winter? We shall not have any wood."

"There is the sun."

"The butcher refuses credit, he will not supply any more meat."

"That is lucky. I digest meat badly. It is very heavy."

"What shall we have for dinner?"

"Bread."

"The baker insists on something on account, and says, no money no bread."

"That's good."

"What will you eat?"

"We have the apples in the apple-loft."

"But, monsieur, we cannot live like that without money."

"I have none."

The old woman went away, the old man re-

mained alone. He began to think. Gavroche, on his part, thought. It was almost night.

The first result of the reflection of Gavroche was that, instead of climbing over the hedge, he crept down under it. The branches parted a little at the bottom of the brushwood.

"Hilloh," said Gavroche inwardly, "an alcove!" and he crept into it. His back was almost against the bench of Father Mabeuf. He could hear the octogenarian breathe.

Then, for dinner, he tried to sleep.

It was the sleep of a cat, with one eye open. All the while he was dozing, Gavroche watched.

The whiteness of the twilight sky whitened the earth, and the lane formed a livid line between two rows of obscure bushes.

All at once on this whitish stripe, two figures appeared. The one came in front, the other a little distance behind.

"Here are two coves," growled Gavroche.

The first figure seemed to be some old bourgeois, bowed and thoughtful, more than simply attired, who walked slowly owing to age, and was strolling about in the starlight.

The second was straight, firm, and slim. It regulated its steps by the steps of the first; but in the voluntary slowness of its gait, could be detected suppleness and agility. This figure had with an indescribable fierce-

ness and disquieting, all the appearance of what was called a dandy in those days; the hat was of good shape, the coat was black, well cut, probably of fine cloth, and fitted to the shape. The head was held up with a sort of robust grace, and, under the hat, a glimpse could be caught in the twilight of a pale, youthful profile. This profile had a rose in its mouth. This second figure was well known to Gavroche; it was Montparnasse.

As for the other, there was nothing to be said, save that it was a respectable old man.

Gavroche immediately began observing.

The one of these two passers-by evidently had designs upon the other. Gavroche was well situated to see what followed. The alcove had opportunely become a hiding-place.

Montparnasse, hunting at such an hour in such a spot,—that was menacing. Gavroche felt his gamin entrails moved with pity for the old gentleman.

What should he do? interfere? one weakness helping another! That was something laughable for Montparnasse. Gavroche did not conceal from himself that for this redoubtable bandit of eighteen years, the old man first, the boy next, would be only two mouthfuls.

While Gavroche was deliberating, the attack took place, sudden and hideous. It was

the attack of a tiger on a wild-ass, the attack of a spider on a fly. Montparnasse, on a sudden, threw away the rose, leaped upon the old man, seized him by the neck, grappled him and clung to him, and Gavroche had difficulty to repress a cry. A moment after, one of these men was beneath the other, crushed, having a rattling in the throat, writhing, with a knee of marble on his chest. Only, it was not at all what Gavroche had anticipated. The man who was on the ground was Montparnasse; the one who was on top was the old man.

All this took place a few steps from Gavroche.

The old man had received the shock, and had repaid it, and repaid so terribly that in the twinkling of an eye the assailant and the assailed had changed parts.

"That's a tough Invalide!" thought Gavroche.

And he could not refrain from clapping his hands. But it was a wasted clapping of the hands. It was not heard by the two combatants, absorbed and deafened the one by the other, and mingling their breaths in the struggle.

Silence approached. Montparnasse ceased to writhe. Gavroche muttered this aside: "Can it be he's dead?"

The old man had not uttered a word nor

given a cry. He stood erect, and Gavroche heard him say to Montparnasse:

"Pick yourself up."

Montparnasse picked himself up, but the old man held him. Montparnasse had the humiliated and furious attitude of a wolf who has been caught by a sheep.

Gavroche looked and listened, making an effort to double his eyes with his ears. He was enormously amused.

He was recompensed for his conscientious anxiety as a spectator. He was able to catch on the wing this dialogue, which borrowed from the darkness an indescribable tragic accent. The old man questioned. Montparnasse answered.

"What age are you?"

"Nineteen years."

"You are strong and healthy. Why do you not work?"

"It bores me."

"What is your trade?"

"Idler."

"Speak seriously. Can anything be done for you? what do you wish to be?"

"A robber."

There was a silence. The old gentleman seemed profoundly thoughtful. He was motionless, but did not loose his hold of Montparnasse.

From moment to moment, the young bandit, vigorous and active, gave starts like a beast caught in a snare. He shook himself, attempted a trip, wildly writhed his limbs, desperately tried to escape. The old gentleman did not appear to perceive it, and held him by his two arms in one hand with the sovereign indifference of absolute force.

The reverie of the old man lasted some time, then, gazing fixedly at Montparnasse, he mildly raised his voice and addressed to him, in the darkness where they were, a sort of solemn allocution, of which Gavroche did not lose one syllable:

"My boy, you are entering by sloth into the most laborious of existences. Ah! you declare yourself an idler! prepare yourself for labor. Have you ever seen a machine which is formidable? it is called a rolling-mill. You must be on your guard against it, it is a sly and ferocious thing; if it catches you by the skirt of your coat it drags you under it entirely. This machine is idleness. . . . Stop, there is yet time, and save yourself! Otherwise, it is all over; before long you will be among the cog-wheels. Once caught, hope for nothing more. You will have fatigue, idler! no more repose. The iron hand of implacable toil has seized you. To earn your livelihood, to have a calling, to

accomplish a duty, you won't! to be like the rest, that is a bore! Ah, well! you will be different. Labor is the law; he who repulses it as a bore must have it as a punishment. You do not wish to be a workman, you shall be a slave. Toil only lets you loose on one side to catch you again on the other; you do not wish to be its friend, you will be its negro. Ah! you did not care for the honest fatigue of men, you are about to know the sweat of the damned. While others sing, you will have a death-rattle. You will see in the distance, at the bottom, other men working; it will seem to you that they are reposing. The laborer, the reaper, the sailor, the blacksmith, will appear to you in the light, like the blessed inmates of a paradise. What a radiance there is in the anvil! To guide the plough, to tie up the sheaf is a joy. The boat at liberty before the wind, what a festival! But you, idler, will have to dig, drag, roll, walk! Pull at your halter, for you are a beast of burden in the service of hell! Ah! to do nothing, that is your object. Ah, well! you will not have a week, not a day, not an hour without feeling crushed. You will not be able to lift anything without anguish. Every passing minute will make your muscles crack. What is a feather for others will be a rock for you. The most simple things will grow scarped. Life will become

a monster around you. Going, coming, breathing, will be so many terrible tasks. Your lungs will produce in you the effect of a hundred pounds weight. Going thither rather than hither, will be a problem to solve. The first man who wishes to go out, pushes open his door, it is done, he is there outside. You, if you wish to go out, you must pierce through your wall. To go out into the street, what does all the world do? All the world descends the staircase; you, you will tear up the sheets of your bed, you will make a cord of them fibre by fibre, then you will pass through your window and hang by this thread over an abyss, and it will be at night, in the storm, in the rain, in the hurricane, and, if the cord is too short, you will have but one way to descend, to fall. To fall hap-hazard into the gulf, from any height, on what? On whatever is below, on the unknown. Or you will climb up a chimney at the risk of burning yourself; or you will crawl through a sewer at the risk of drowning. I will say nothing of the holes which must be masked, of the stones which you will have to remove and put back twenty times a day, of the plaster you must hide under your mattress. A lock presents itself; the bourgeois has in his pocket the key for it, made by the locksmith. You, if you wish to go out, you are condemned to

make a terrible masterpiece; you will take a big sou, and cut it into two plates; with what tools? you must invent them. That is your business. Then you will hollow out the interior of the two plates, being careful not to injure the outside, and you will form a thread all round the edge, so that the two parts may fit closely like a box and its cover. The upper and the lower when screwed together will suggest nothing. For the watchers, and you will be watched, it will be a big sou; for yourself it will be a box. What will you place in this box? A small piece of steel. A watch-spring, in which you have made teeth, and which will be a saw. With this saw, as long as a pin and hidden in a sou, you will be obliged to cut through the bolt of the lock, the slide of the bolt, the padlock of your chain, and the bar you will have before your window, and the fetter you will have on your leg. This masterpiece done, this prodigy accomplished, all these miracles of art, of skill, of cleverness, of patience, executed, if it is found out that you are their author, what will be your reward? a dungeon. Such is the future. Idleness, pleasure, what precipices! To do nothing is a melancholy condition, do you well know that? To live in indolence on the social substance! to be useless, that is to say, injurious! this leads straight to the bottom

of misery. Woe to him who wishes to be a parasite! he will be a vermin! Ah! it does not please you to work? Ah! you have only one thought, to drink well, to eat well, to sleep well. You will drink water, you will eat black bread, you will sleep on a plank, with fetters riveted to your limbs, and of which you will feel the coldness at night in your flesh! You will break these fetters, you will fly. That's good. You will drag yourself on your belly into the shrubs and you will eat grass like the beasts of the field. And you will be recaptured. And then you will pass years in a dungeon, chained to a wall, groping in the dark for drink from your water-jug, biting at frightful black bread which dogs would refuse, eating beans that maggots have eaten before you. You will be a woodlouse in a cellar. Ah! have pity on yourself, miserable boy, still so young, who were at your nurse's breast not twenty years ago, and who hast doubtless still a mother! I implore you to listen to me. You want fine black cloth, polished pump-shoes, to curl your hair, to scent your head with oil that smells nice, to please creatures, to be a pretty fellow. You will have your hair close shaven, and wear a red jacket and wooden shoes. You want a ring on your finger, you will wear a collar on your neck. And if you look at a woman you will be

beaten with a club. And you will go in there at twenty years of age, and you will come out at fifty! You will go in young, red-cheeked, untainted, with your eyes sparkling, and all your teeth white, and the beautiful head of hair of a youth, you will come out again broken, bent, wrinkled, toothless, horrible, white-haired! Ah! my poor boy, you are on the wrong road, idleness is a bad adviser; robbery is the roughest of labors. Trust me, do not undertake the laborious task of being an idler. To become a rogue is not convenient. It is not nearly so hard to be an honest man. Now go, and think over what I have said to you. By the by, what did you want of me? My purse? Here it is."

And the old man, releasing Montparnasse, placed his purse in his hand, which Montparnasse weighed for a moment; after which, with the same mechanical precaution as if he had stolen it, Montparnasse let it glide gently into the back-pocket of his coat.

All this said and done, the old gentleman turned his back and quietly resumed his walk.

"Dolt!" muttered Montparnasse.

Who was the old gentleman? the reader has doubtless divined.

Montparnasse, stupefied, watched him disappear in the gloom. This contemplation was fatal for him.

While the old gentleman retired, Gavroche advanced.

Gavroche had assured himself by a side-glance of the eye, that Father Mabeuf, probably asleep, was still seated on his bench. Then the gamin left the bushes, and began crawling in the shadow behind the motionless Montparnasse. He thus got up to Montparnasse without having been discovered, gently insinuated his hand into the pocket at the back of the coat of fine black cloth, seized the purse, withdrew his hand, and creeping off, made his escape back again into the shadow like a lizard. Montparnasse, who had no reason to be on his guard, and who was thinking for the first time in his life, perceived nothing. Gavroche, when he had returned to the spot where Father Mabeuf was sitting, threw the purse over the hedge and ran off at full speed.

The purse fell at the feet of Father Mabeuf. This commotion awoke him. He stooped down and picked up the purse. He comprehended nothing and opened it. It was a purse with two compartments; in one, was some change; in the other there were six Napoleons.

M. Mabeuf, greatly startled, carried the thing to his housekeeper.

"It has fallen from heaven," said Mother Plutarch.

BOOK FIVE

IN WHICH THE END DOES NOT AT ALL RESEMBLE THE COMMENCEMENT

I.

SOLITUDE AND THE BARRACKS COMBINED

The sorrow of Cosette, so poignant still and so sharp four or five months previously, had, without her knowledge, attained the stage of convalescence. Nature, spring, youth, love for her father, the gayety of the birds and of the flowers, filtered little by little, day by day, drop by drop, into her soul so virginal and so youthful, something indescribable that almost resembled oblivion. Was the fire entirely extinguished? or were layers of ashes merely formed? The fact is, that she hardly felt at all the painful and burning point.

One day she suddenly thought of Marius: "Why!" said she, "I do not think of him now."

This same week she noticed, while passing before the grating of the garden, a very handsome officer of the lancers, waist of a wasp, a ravishing uniform, the cheeks of a girl, a sabre under his arm, waxed mustaches, and polished schapska. Moreover, he had light hair, full

blue eyes, a round, vain, insolent, and pretty face; he was the opposite of Marius. A cigar in his mouth.—Cosette supposed that this officer, without doubt, belonged to the regiment in barracks on the Rue de Babylone.

The next day she saw him pass again. She remarked the hour.

Dating from this moment, was it an accident? almost every day she saw him pass.

The officer's comrades perceived that there was in this garden, "badly kept," behind this poor, old-fashioned railing, a very pretty creature who happened nearly always to be there at the passing of the handsome lieutenant who is not unknown to the reader, and whose name was Théodule Gillenormand.

"Stop!" said they to him. "There's a little girl making eyes at you, look at her."

"Have I the time," replied the lancer, "to look at all the girls who look at me?"

It was precisely the time when Marius was slowly descending toward agony, and said: "If I could only see her again before I die!" If his wish had been realized, if he had at that moment seen Cosette looking at a lancer, he would have been unable to utter a word, and he would have expired of grief.

Whose fault would it have been? Nobody's.

Marius had one of those temperaments which bury themselves in chagrin and abide in it;

Cosette had one of those which plunge into it and come out again.

Cosette, however, was passing through that dangerous moment, the fatal phase of feminine reverie abandoned to itself, in which the heart of an isolated maiden resembles those tendrils of the vine which cling, according to chance, to the capital of a column of marble or to the sign-post of an inn.

A rapid and decisive moment, critical for every orphan, whether she be poor or whether she be rich, for wealth does not prevent a bad choice; misalliances take place in very high society; the true misalliance is that of souls; and in the same way as more than one unknown young man, without name, without birth, without fortune, is a marble capital supporting a temple of grand sentiments and of grand ideas, just so, many a man of the world, satisfied and opulent, who has polished boots and varnished words, if we look, not at the exterior but at the interior, that is to say, at what is reserved for the wife, is nothing else but a stupid joist obscurely haunted by violent, unclean, and drunken passions; the sign-post of an inn.

What was there in the soul of Cosette? Passion calmed or lulled to sleep; love in a floating state; something which was limpid, brilliant, perturbed at a certain depth, sombre

lower still. The image of the handsome officer was reflected on the surface. Was there any reminiscence at the bottom?—quite at the bottom?—Perhaps. Cosette did not know.

A singular incident occurred.

II.

FEARS OF COSETTE

In the first fortnight of April Jean Valjean went on a journey. This, as we know, occurred from time to time, at very long intervals. He remained absent one or two days at the most. Where did he go? no one knew, not even Cosette. Once only, on one of these trips, she had accompanied him in a fiacre, to the corner of a little cul-de-sac, on the corner of which she had read: *Impasse de la Planchette.* He got out there, and the fiacre carried Cosette back to the Rue de Babylone. It was generally when money was wanting in the house that Jean Valjean took these little journeys.

Jean Valjean, then, was absent. He had said: "I shall be back in three days."

In the evening Cosette was alone in the drawing-room. In order to while away the time, she opened her piano and she began to sing, playing an accompaniment, the chorus from Euryanthe: *Hunters wandering in the woods!* which is probably the most beautiful

thing in all music. When she had finished she remained pensive.

All of a sudden it seemed to her she heard some one walking in the garden.

It could not be her father, he was away; it could not be Toussaint, she was in bed. It was ten o'clock at night.

She went near to the window-shutter of the drawing-room which was closed, and put her ear to it.

It seemed to her that it was the step of a man, and that he was walking very gently.

She ran hurriedly up to the first-floor, into her room, opened a slide in her shutter, and looked out into the garden. It was the time of the full moon. She could see as plainly as in broad day.

There was nobody there.

She opened the window. The garden was absolutely silent, and all that she could see of the street was as deserted as it always is.

Cosette thought that she was mistaken. She had believed that she heard the noise. It was an hallucination produced by the sombre and prodigious chorus of Weber, which opens before the mind profound depths, that tremble before the eye like a bewildering forest, and in which we hear the cracking of the dead branches under the restless feet of the hunters, dimly seen in the twilight.

She thought no more of it.

Moreover, Cosette was not by nature easily startled. She had in her veins some of the blood of the Bohemian, and of the adventuress who goes bare-foot. As we may remember she was more of a lark than a dove. She was wild and brave at heart.

The next day, not so late, at nightfall, she was walking in the garden. In the midst of the confused thoughts which occupied her, she fancied she could distinguish for a moment a noise like the noise of the previous night, as if some one were walking in the gloom under the trees not very far from her, but she said to herself that nothing so resembles the sound of a step on the grass as the rustling of two branches against one another, and she took no heed of it. Besides, she saw nothing.

She left the "thicket;" she had to cross a small grass-plot ere she reached the steps. The moon, which had just risen behind her, projected, as Cosette left the clump of bushes, her shadow before her upon this grass-plot.

Cosette stood still, terrified.

By the side of her shadow, the moon traced distinctly on the grass another shadow singularly startling and terrible, a shadow which had a round hat.

It was like the shadow of a man who was

standing on the edge of the clump a few steps behind Cosette.

She was for a minute unable to speak or cry, or call out, or stir, or turn her head.

At last she collected all her courage and resolutely turned round.

There was nobody there.

She looked on the ground. The shadow had disappeared.

She went back to the thicket, searched bravely in the corners, went as far as the grating, and discovered nothing.

She felt truly chilled. Was it again an hallucination? What! two days in succession! One hallucination might pass, but two hallucinations? What was most disquieting was, that the shadow was assuredly certainly not a phantom. Phantoms never wear round hats.

The next day Jean Valjean returned. Cosette told him what she fancied she had seen and heard. She expected to be reassured, and that her father would shrug his shoulders and would say to her: "You are a little goose."

Jean Valjean became anxious.

"It may be nothing," said he to her.

He left her under some pretext, and went into the garden, and she saw him examine the grating with much attention.

In the night she woke up; this time she was sure, she distinctly heard some one walking

near the steps under her window. She walked to her shutter and opened it. There was really in the garden a man who held a large stick in his hand. At the moment when she was going to cry out, the moon lit up the profile of the man. It was her father.

She went to bed again saying: "He is then really anxious!"

Jean Valjean passed that and the two following nights in the garden. Cosette saw him through the hole in her shutter.

The third night the moon was decreasing and was beginning to rise later, it might be about one in the morning when she heard a hearty burst of laughter, and the voice of her father calling her:

"Cosette!"

She leaped out of bed, put on her dressing-gown and opened her window.

Her father was standing on the grass-plot below.

"I have woke you up to reassure you," said he, "look. Here's your shadow in a round hat."

And he showed her on the sward a shadow, which the moon designed, and which really looked rather like the spectre of a man who had on a round hat. It was an outline produced by a sheet-iron stove-pipe, with a cowl, which rose above an adjoining roof.

Cosette also began to laugh, all her lugubrious suppositions fell away, and the next morning, when breakfasting with her father, she jested at the ill-omened garden, haunted by the ghosts of stove-pipes.

Jean Valjean quite regained his ease; as for Cosette, she did not notice particularly whether the stove-pipe was really in the direction of the shadow which she had seen or believed she saw, and whether the moon was in the same part of the heavens. She made no question as to the singularity of a stove-pipe which is afraid of being caught in the act, and retires when its shadow is looked at, for the shadow had disappeared when Cosette turned herself round, and Cosette believed herself quite certain of that fact. Cosette became quite reassured. The demonstration seemed to her complete, and the thought that there could have been anyone walking in the garden that evening or that night, left her head.

A few days after, however, a new incident occurred.

III.

ENRICHED BY THE COMMENTARIES OF TOUSSAINT

In the garden, near the railings looking out on the street, there was a stone bench, protected by a hedge from the gaze of the curious, but which, nevertheless, by an effort, the arm of a passer-by could reach through the grating and the hedge.

One evening, in this same month of April, Jean Valjean had gone out, Cosette, after sunset, was seated on this bench. The wind was freshening in the trees, Cosette was musing; a sadness without object was gaining on her little by little, that invincible sadness which night produces, and which comes perhaps, who knows? from the mystery of the tomb which is yawning at that hour.

Fantine was possibly in that shadow.

Cosette rose, made slowly the round of the garden, walking on the dew-laden grass, and saying to herself, through the sort of melancholy somnambulism in which she was plunged: "I ought really to have wooden

shoes for the garden at this hour. I shall catch cold."

She returned to the bench.

At the moment when she was sitting down she noticed at the place she had left a rather large stone, which had evidently not been there a moment before.

Cosette looked at this stone, asking herself what it meant. All at once the idea that the stone had not come upon the bench of itself, that some one had placed it there, that an arm had been passed through the grating,—this idea occurred to her and made her afraid. This time it was a real fear; there was the stone. No doubt was possible; she did not touch it, she fled without daring to look behind her, sought refuge in the house, and at once closed the window-shutter, and barred and bolted the French window opening on the steps. She demanded of Toussaint:

"Has my father come in?"

"Not yet, mademoiselle."

(We have indicated once for all Toussaint's stammering. We ask leave no longer to accentuate it. We dislike the musical notation of an infirmity.)

Jean Valjean, a pensive man and a night-walker, often did not return till late at night.

"Toussaint," continued Cosette, "you are careful to barricade at night the shutters well,

upon the garden, at least, with the bars and to fix well the little iron things in the rings that close them."

"Oh! be content, mademoiselle."

Toussaint did not fail, and Cosette knew it well, but she could not refrain from adding:

"It is so solitary about here!"

"For that matter," said Toussaint, "that's true. We might be assassinated before we had time to say, Ouf! And then, too, monsieur does not sleep in the house. But don't be frightened, mademoiselle, I fasten up the windows like Bastilles. Lone women! I am quite sure it is enough to make a body shudder! Only think! to see men coming at night into your bed-room and say to you: 'Hold your tongue!' and set themselves to cut your throat. It is not so much the dying, for everybody dies, that's right, we know well enough we must die, but it is the abomination of feeling those fellows touch you. And then their knives, perhaps they cut badly! Oh, God!"

"Hold your tongue," said Cosette. "Fasten up everything well."

Cosette, terrified by the melodrama improvised by Toussaint, and perhaps too by the recollection of the apparitions of the last week, which returned to her mind, did not even dare to say to her: "Go and look at

the stone which somebody has laid on the bench!" for fear of having to open the garden gate again, and lest "the men" might walk in. She had all the doors and windows carefully closed, made Toussaint go over the whole house from cellar to garret, locked herself in her bedroom, fastened her bolts, looked under her bed, threw herself down, and slept badly. The whole night through she saw the stone as large as a mountain and full of caverns.

At sunrise—the peculiarity of sunrise is to make us laugh at all our terrors of the night, and our laughter is always proportioned to the fear we have had—at sunrise, Cosette, on waking, looked upon her terror as a nightmare, and said to herself: "What have I been dreaming about? It was like the steps which I fancied I heard last week in the garden at night! it is like the shadow of the stove-pipe! Am I going to turn coward now?" The sun which poured through the chinks of her shutters and made the damask curtains purple, reassured her so fully that all faded away from her mind, even the stone.

"There was no more a stone on the bench than there was a man in a round hat in the garden; I have dreamed the stone like the rest."

She dressed herself, went down into the

garden, ran to the bench, and felt a cold sweat. The stone was there.

But this only lasted for a moment. What is terror by night is curiosity by day.

"Bah!" said she, "now let us see."

She raised the stone, which was pretty large. There was something under it that resembled a letter.

It was an envelope of white paper. Cosette seized it. There was no address on the one side, no seal on the other. Still, the envelope, though open, was not empty. Papers could be seen inside.

Cosette examined it. There was no longer terror, there was more of curiosity; it was a commencement of anxiety.

Cosette took out from the envelope what it contained, a small quire of paper, each page of which was numbered, and bore several lines written in a rather pretty handwriting, thought Cosette, and very fine.

Cosette looked for a name, there was none; a signature, there was none. To whom was it addressed? To her probably, as a hand had laid the packet on the bench. From whom had it come? An irresistible fascination seized upon her, she tried to turn her eyes away from these pages, which trembled in her hand, she looked at the sky, the street, the acacias all bathed in light, the pigeons flying

about a neighboring roof, then all of a sudden her eye eagerly settled on the manuscript, and she said to herself that she must know what there was in it.

This is what she read:

IV.

A HEART UNDER A STONE

The reduction of the universe to a single being, the expansion of a single being even to God, this is love.

Love is the salutation of the angels to the stars.

How sad is the soul when it is sad from love!

What a void is the absence of the being, who of her own self fills the world! Oh! how true it is that the beloved being becomes God. One could comprehend how God might be jealous if the Father of all had not evidently made creation for the soul, and the soul for love.

It is enough, to catch a glimpse of a smile under a white crape bonnet with a lilac coronet, in order for the soul to enter the palace of dreams.

God is behind everything, but everything conceals God. Things are black, creatures are opaque. To love a being, is to render her transparent.

Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever may be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.

Separated lovers cheat absence by a thousand chimerical things, which, however, have their reality. They are prevented from seeing each other, they cannot write; they find a multitude of mysterious ways to correspond. They send to each other the song of the birds, the perfume of the flowers, the laughter of children, the light of the sun, the sighs of the wind, the rays of the stars, the whole of creation. And why not? All the works of God are made to serve love. Love is sufficiently powerful to charge all nature with its messages.

Oh, spring! thou art a letter which I write to her.

The future belongs even more to hearts than to minds. To love, is the only thing which can occupy and fill eternity. The infinite needs the inexhaustible.

Love partakes of the soul itself. It is of the

same nature. Like it, it is the divine spark, like it, it is incorruptible, indivisible, imperishable. It is a point of fire which is within us, which is immortal and infinite, which nothing can limit, and which nothing can extinguish. We feel it burn even in the marrow of our bones, and see its flashing even in the depths of the heavens.

Oh, love! adorations! voluptuousness of two minds which comprehend each other, of two hearts which are exchanged, of two glances that penetrate one another! You will come to me, will you not, happiness! Walks, by two, in the solitudes! blest and radiant days! I have sometimes dreamed that from time to time hours were detached from the life of the angels, and came down here to traverse the destinies of men.

God can add nothing to the happiness of those who love, except to give them duration without end. After a life of love, an eternity of love, is in truth an augmentation; but to increase in its intensity the ineffable felicity which love gives to the soul in this world is impossible, even with God. God is the plenitude of heaven; love is the plenitude of man.

You gaze at a star from two motives, because it is luminous and because it is impene-

trable. You have by your side a sweeter radiance and a greater mystery, woman.

All of us, whoever we may be, have our respirable beings. If they fail us, air fails us, we stifle. Then we die. To die through want of love is frightful. It is the asphyxia of the soul.

When love has blended and moulded two beings in one angelic and sacred unity, the secret of life is found for them; they are then but the two terms of the same destiny; they are then but the two wings of one mind. Love, soar!

On the day when a woman who passes before you emits light as she walks, you are lost, you love. You have from that moment but one thing to do, to think of her so fixedly that she will be compelled to think of you.

What love commences can only be completed by God.

True love is in despair, and in raptures over a lost glove or over a handkerchief found, and it requires eternity for its devotion and its hopes. It is composed at once of the infinitely great and of the infinitely little.

If you are a stone, be a magnet; if you are a plant, be sensitive; if you are a man, be love.

Nothing suffices for love. We have happiness, we wish for paradise, we have paradise, we wish for heaven.

Oh, ye who love each other, have all this contained in love. Be wise enough to find it. Love has, equally with heaven, contemplation, and more than heaven, passionate delight.

"Does she still go to the Luxembourg?" "No, monsieur." "She hears mass in that church, does she not?" "She does not go there any longer." "Does she still live in this house?" "She has removed." "Where has she gone to live?" "She did not say."

What a gloomy thing it is not to know the address of one's soul!

Love has its child's play, the other passions have their littlenesses. Shame on the passions that render a man little! Honor to that which makes him a child!

It is a strange thing, are you aware of it? I am in the night. There is a being who has gone away and has carried off heaven with her.

Oh! to be laid side by side in the same tomb hand in hand, and from time to time, in the darkness, to gently caress a finger, that would suffice for my eternity.

You who suffer because you love, love more than ever. To die of love is to live by it.

Love. A sombre, starry transfiguration, is mingled with this crucifixion. There is ecstasy in the agony.

Oh, joy of the birds! it is because they have the nest, that they have the song.

Love is the celestial respiration of the air of paradise.

Profound hearts, wise minds, take life as God has made it; it is a long trial, an unintelligible preparation for the unknown destiny. This destiny, the true one, begins for man with the first step in the interior of the tomb. Then something appears to him, and he begins to distinguish the definite. The definite, reflect on that word. The living see the infinite; the definite only reveals itself to the dead. In the meanwhile, love and suffer, hope and contemplate. Woe, alas! to the man who shall only have loved bodies, shapes, appearances!

Death will strip him of all that. Try to love souls, you shall find them again.

I have met in the street a young man very poor, who was in love. His hat was old, his coat was worn; he had holes at his elbows; the water passed through his shoes, and the stars through his soul.

What a grand thing, to be loved! What a grander thing still, to love! The heart becomes heroic by the force of passion. It is no longer composed of anything but what is pure; it is only supported by what is elevated and great. An unworthy thought can no more germinate in it than a nettle on a glacier. The lofty and serene soul, inaccessible to passions and to vulgar emotions, soaring above the clouds and the shadows of this world, its follies, its falsehoods, its hatreds, its vanities, its miseries, dwells in the azure of the sky, and henceforth only feels the profound and subterranean heavings of destiny, as the summit of the mountains feels the quakings of the earth.

If there were nobody who loved, the sun would be extinguished.

V.

COSETTE AFTER THE LETTER

During the reading, Cosette fell little by little into a reverie. At the moment when she raised her eyes from the last line of the paper, the handsome officer, it was his hour, passed triumphantly in front of the grating. Cosette found him hideous.

She began gazing at the roll of paper again. It was written in an exquisite hand-writing, thought Cosette; in the same hand, but with different inks, sometimes very black, sometimes pale, according as ink is put into the ink-stand, and consequently on different days. It was, then, a thought expanded on paper, sigh by sigh, irregularly, without order, without choice, without purpose, hap-hazardly. Cosette had never read anything like it. This manuscript, in which she saw more light than obscurity, produced on her the effect of a half-opened sanctuary. Each of these mysterious lines flashed in her eyes, and inundated her heart with a strange light. The education

which she had received had always spoken to her of the soul, and never of love, almost as if a person were to speak of the fire-brand and say nothing of the flame. This manuscript of fifteen pages suddenly and gently revealed to her the whole of love, sorrow, destiny, life, eternity, the beginning, the end. It was like a hand which had opened and thrown suddenly upon her a handful of sunbeams. She felt in these few lines a passionate, ardent, generous, honest nature, a consecrated will, an immense grief, and an immense hope, an oppressed heart, a brightened ecstasy. What was this manuscript? A letter. A letter without address, without name, without date, without signature, pressing and disinterested, an enigma composed of truths, a message of love made to be borne by an angel and read by a virgin, a rendezvous given beyond the world, a love-letter from a phantom to a shadow. He was a tranquil and crushed absent one, who seemed ready to seek a refuge in death, and who had sent to his absent one the secret of destiny, the key of life, love. It had been written with the foot in the grave and the finger in heaven. These lines, which had fallen one by one on the paper, were what might be called drops of soul.

Now these pages, from whom could they have come? who could have written them?

Cosette did not hesitate for a moment. One man only.

Him!

Daylight had revived in her mind. Everything reappeared. She experienced an extraordinary joy and a profound anguish. It was he! he who had written to her! he who was there! he whose arm had passed through the grating! While she was forgetting him he had found her again! But had she forgotten him? No, never! She was mad to have thought so for a moment. She had always loved him, always adored him. The fire was covered, and had smouldered for a time, but, as she now saw plainly, it had only sunk in the deeper, and now it burst out anew, and fired her whole being. This letter was like a spark dropped from that other soul into hers. She felt the conflagration begin again. She was penetrated by each word of the manuscript. "Oh! yes!" said she, "how I recognize all this! This is what I had already read in his eyes."

As she finished reading it for the third time, Lieutenant Théodule returned past the railings, and clanked his spurs on the pavement. Cosette mechanically raised her eyes. She found him insipid, silly, stupid, useless, conceited, displeasing, impertinent, and very ugly. The officer thought himself bound to smile. She

turned away insulted and indignant. She would gladly have thrown something at his head.

She ran away, re-entered the house and locked herself in her bed-room, to read over the manuscript again, to learn it by heart, and to dream. When she had read it thoroughly she kissed it and put it in her corset.

It was done, Cosette had fallen back into the profound seraphic love. The abyss of Eden had opened again.

All that day Cosette was in a state of bewilderment. She hardly thought, her ideas were in the state of a tangled skein in her brain, she could not conjecture anything, she hoped through a tremor, what? vague things. She did not dare promise herself anything, and she would not refuse herself anything. Pallors passed over her face, and quivers over her body. She fancied at moments that it was all a chimera; she said to herself: "Is it real?" then she felt the well-beloved paper under her dress, she pressed it against her heart, she felt the corners against her flesh, and if Jean Valjean had seen her at that moment, he would have shuddered before that luminous and unknown joy which overflowed from her eyes. "Oh! yes!" thought she. "It is certainly his! this comes from him for me!"

And she said to herself that an intervention

of angels, that a celestial accident, had restored him to her.

Oh, transfiguration of love! oh, dreams! this celestial accident, this intervention of angels, was the ball of bread cast by one robber to another robber from the Charlemagne yard to the Lions' Den, over the roofs of La Force.

VI.

THE OLD ARE MADE TO GO OUT WHEN CONVENIENT

When evening came, Jean Valjean went out, Cosette dressed herself. She arranged her hair in the manner that best became her, and she put on a dress whose body, as it had received a cut of the scissors too much and as, by this slope, it allowed the turn of the neck to be seen, was, as girls say, "a little improper." It was not the least in the world improper, but it was prettier than otherwise. She dressed herself in this way without knowing why.

Did she intend to go out? No.

Did she expect a visitor? No.

At dusk, she went down into the garden. Toussaint was engaged in her kitchen, which looked out on the backyard.

She began to walk under the branches, removing them from time to time with her hand, because they were very low there.

She thus reached the bench.

The stone was still there.

She sat down and laid her soft white hand

on the stone, as if she wished to caress it and to thank it.

All at once she had that indefinable impression which we feel, without seeing anything, when somebody is standing behind us.

She turned her head and arose.

It was he.

He was bare-headed. He seemed pale and thin. His black clothes could be scarcely distinguished. The twilight whitened his glorious forehead, and covered his eyes with darkness. He had, beneath a veil of incomparable sweetness, something belonging to death and to night. His face was lit up by the flush of a day that is dying, and by the thought of a soul that is expiring.

He seemed as if he were not yet a phantom, and yet he was no longer a man.

His hat was thrown a few paces from him among the shrubs.

Cosette, though ready to faint, did not utter a cry. She slowly recoiled as she felt herself attracted. He did not stir. Through a something ineffable and sad, that enveloped him, she felt the glance of his eyes which she could not see.

Cosette, in recoiling, encountered a tree, and leaned against it. But for this tree she would have fallen.

Then she heard his voice, that voice which

she had really never heard, which he raised hardly louder than the rustling of the foliage, and he murmured:

"Pardon me, I am here. My heart is bursting, I could not live as I was, I have come. Have you read what I placed there, on this bench? Do you recognize me at all? Do not be afraid of me. It is a long time now, do you remember that day when you looked at me? it was in the Luxembourg, near the Gladiator. And the days when you passed before me? They were the 16th of June and the 2d of July. It is nearly a year ago. For a very long time now I have not seen you at all. I inquired of the woman who lets out chairs, she told me that she did not see you any more. You lived in the Rue de l'Ouest on the third floor front of a new house, you see that I know. I followed you. What could I do? and then you disappeared. I fancied that I saw you pass once as I was reading the papers under the arcades of the Odéon. I ran. But no. It was a person who had a hat like yours. At night I come here. Fear nothing, no one sees me. I come to look at your windows very near. I walk very softly that you may not hear me, for you would perhaps be alarmed. The other evening I was behind you, you turned round, I fled. Once I heard you sing. I was happy. Does it harm you that I should listen to you

through the shutters while singing? that can do you no harm. No, that cannot be! You see, you are my angel, let me come now and then. I believe that I am going to die. If you knew! I adore you! Pardon me, I am speaking to you, I do not know what I am saying, perhaps I offend you; do I offend you?"

"Oh, my mother!" said she.

And she sank down upon herself as if she were dying.

He caught her, she was falling, he took her in his arms, he clasped her tightly without knowing what he was doing. He supported her even while tottering himself. He felt as if his head were full of smoke; flashes passed between his eyelashes; his ideas vanished; it seemed to him as if he were accomplishing a religious act, and that he was committing a profanation. Moreover, he had not the least desire for this ravishing woman, whose form he felt against his breast. He was lost in love.

She took his hand, and laid it on her heart. He felt the paper she had there, he stammered:

"You love me, then?"

She answered in a voice so low, that it was no more than a breath, which could scarcely be heard:

"Hush! you know it!"

And she hid her blushing face in the chest of the proud and intoxicated young man.

He fell upon the bench, and she by his side. They no longer found words. The stars were beginning to twinkle. How came it that their lips met? How comes it that the bird sings, that the snow melts, that the rose opens, that May bursts into life, that the dawn grows white behind the black trees on the rustling tops of the hills?

One kiss, and that was all.

Both trembled and gazed at each other in the darkness with brilliant eyes.

They neither felt the fresh night nor the cold stone, nor the moist soil, nor the damp grass, they looked at each other, and their hearts were full of thought. Their hands were clasped without knowing it.

She did not ask him, she did not even think of it, how he had entered and how he had penetrated the garden. It seemed to her so natural that he should be there.

From time to time the knee of Marius touched the knee of Cosette, and both of them thrilled.

At intervals Cosette faltered out a word. Her soul trembled on her lips like a drop of dew upon a flower.

Little by little they talked. Overflow succeeded to silence which is plenitude. The night was serene and splendid above their heads. These two beings, pure as

spirits, told each other everything, their dreams, their intoxication, their ecstasy, their chimeras, their depressions, how they had adored each other from afar, how they had longed for each other, their despair when they ceased to see each other. They confided to each other in an ideal intimacy which nothing henceforth could increase, all that was most hidden and mysterious of themselves. They recounted, with a candid faith in their illusions, all that love, youth, and that remnant of childhood which they still had suggested to their thought. Their two hearts were poured from one into the other, so that at the end of an hour, it was the young man who had the soul of the maiden, and the maiden who had the soul of the young man. They inter-penetrated, they enchanted, they dazzled one another.

When they had finished, when they had told each other everything, she laid her head upon his shoulder and asked him:

"What is your name?"

"My name is Marius," said he. "And yours?"

"My name is Cosette."

BOOK SIX

LITTLE GAVROCHE

A MALEVOLENT TRICK OF THE WIND

Since 1823, while the cook-shop of Montfermeil was sinking, and being swallowed up little by little, not in the abyss of a bankruptcy, but in the sink of petty debts, the Thénardier couple had had two more children, both of them males. This made five; two daughters and three boys. It was a good many.

The Thénardiess had got rid of the last two, while of an early age and quite small, with singular good luck.

Got rid of, is the word. There was in this woman only a fragment of nature. A phenomenon, moreover, of which there is more than one example. Like the Maréchale de La Mothe-Houdancourt, the Thénardiess was a mother only to her daughters. Her maternity finished there. Her hatred of the human race began with her boys. On the side toward her sons her malignity was precipitous, and her heart had at that spot a lugubrious escarpment. As we have seen, she

detested the eldest, she execrated the other two. Why? Because. The most terrible of motives and most indisputable of answers: Because. "I have no use for a squalling pack of brats," said this mother.

Let us now explain how the Thénardiers had managed to disencumber themselves of their last two children, and even to make a profit of them.

That Magnon girl, of whom mention was made a few pages back, was the same who continued to get an annuity out of the good man Gillenormand for the two children she had. She lived on the Quai des Célestins, at the corner of that ancient street du Petit-Musc, which has done all it could to change into a good odor its bad renown. Many will remember the great epidemic of croup, which, thirty-five years ago, desolated the banks of the Seine in Paris, and of which science took advantage to experiment on a grand scale as to the efficacy of inhalations of alum, so usefully replaced to-day by the external application of the tincture of iodine. In this epidemic Magnon lost on the same day, one in the morning, the other in the evening, her two boys, both of a very small age. This was a blow. These children were precious to their mother; they represented eighty francs a month. These eighty francs were very punctually paid in the name of M. Gillenormand,

by the receiver of his rents, M. Barge, a retired constable, in the Rue du Roi-de-Sicile. The children dead, the annuity was buried. Magnon sought for an expedient. In the dark freemasonry of evil of which she made a part, everything is known, secrets are kept, and each helps the other. Magnon wanted two children; the Thénardiers had two. Same sex, same age. A good arrangement for the one, a good investment for the other. The little Thénardiers became the little Magnons. Magnon left the Quai des Célestins, and went to live in the Rue Cloche-perce. In Paris, the identity which attaches an individual to himself is broken by moving from one street to another.

The Government, not being warned by anything, did not object, and the substitution was effected in the simplest way in the world. Only, Thénardier demanded for this loan of the children ten francs a month, which Magnon promised, and even paid. It goes without saying that M. Gillenormand continued to sacrifice himself. He went every six months to see the little ones. He did not notice the change. "Monsieur," said Magnon to him, "how much they resemble you!"

Thénardier, to whom avatars were easy, seized this occasion to become Jondrette. His two daughters and Gavroche had scarcely

had time to perceive that they had two little brothers. In a certain stage of misery, people are possessed by a sort of spectral indifference, and they regard human beings as maggots. Your nearest relatives are often to you no more than vague forms of shadow, hardly distinguishable from the nebulous background of life, and easily blended again with the invisible.

On the evening of the day she had handed over her two little ones to Magnon, with the heartily expressed will of renouncing them forever, the Thénardiess had had or pretended to have, a scruple. She said to her husband: "But, this is abandoning one's children!" Thénardier, magisterial and phlegmatic, cauterized the scruple with this remark: "Jean-Jacques Rousseau did better!" From scruple the mother passed to anxiety: "But suppose the police come to trouble us? What have we done here, Monsieur Thénardier, say now, is it permitted?" Thénardier replied: "Everything is permitted. Nobody under the sky will see it. Besides, in the case of children who haven't a sou, nobody has any interest in inquiring closely after them."

Magnon was a sort of fashionable lady in crime. She made a toilette. She shared her rooms, furnished in an affected and miserable fashion, with a very clever Frenchified English thief. This Englishwoman, a naturalized

Parisian, recommendable by very rich relations, intimately connected with the medals of the Bibliothèque and the diamonds of Mlle. Mars, was at a later date celebrated in the judicial journals. She was called *Mamselle Miss.*

The two little ones who had fallen to the lot of Magnon had no cause to complain. Recommended by the eighty francs, they were taken care of, like everything which brings a profit; they were not badly clothed, not badly fed, treated almost like "little gentlemen," better off with their false mother than with the true one. Magnon acted the lady, and never talked *argot*, slang, before them.

They passed some years thus. The Thênardiess augured well of it. One day Thénardier happened to say to Magnon as she handed him the monthly ten francs: "The 'father' must give them an education."

All at once these two poor children, hitherto tolerably well protected, even by their evil destiny, were suddenly hurled into life, and forced to begin it.

An arrest *en masse* of criminals, like that in the Jondrette garret, necessarily complicated with researches and ulterior incarcerations, is a veritable disaster for that hideous and occult counter-society which lives beneath public society; an adventure of this nature produces all sorts of breaks-up in that gloomy world.

The catastrophe of the Thénardiers produced the catastrophe of Magnon.

One day, a little time after Magnon had given to Eponine the note relative to the Rue Plumet, the police made a sudden descent on the Rue Cloche-perce; Magnon was arrested, as was Mamselle Miss, and all the inhabitants of the house, which was suspected, were included in the haul. The two little boys were playing at the time in a backyard, and saw nothing of the raid. When they tried to re-enter they found the door locked and the house empty. A cobbler whose stall was opposite called to them and gave them a paper which "their mother" had left for them. On the paper there was an address: "M. Barge, receiver of rents, No. 8, Rue du Roi-de-Sicile." The man of the shop said to them: "You no longer live here. Go there. It is close by. The first street to the left. Ask your way with this paper."

The children set off, the elder leading the younger, and holding in his hand the paper which was to guide them. It was cold, and his benumbed little fingers slightly clasped the paper and held it badly. As they were turning out of the Rue Cloche-perce, a puff of wind tore it from him, and, as night was coming on, the child could not find it again.

They began to wander, hap-hazard, in the streets.

II.

IN WHICH LITTLE GAVROCHE TAKES ADVANTAGE OF NAPOLEON THE GREAT

Spring in Paris is very often accompanied by sharp and violent north winds, by which one is not precisely frozen, but frost-bitten; these north winds, which sadden the most beautiful days, produce exactly the effect of the blasts of cold air which enter a warm room through the crevices of a window or of a door badly-closed. It seems as if the gloomy gate of winter were left ajar, and that the wind comes from there. In the spring of 1832, the epoch when the first great epidemic of this century broke out in Europe, these north winds were sharper and more cutting than ever. It was a door more icy still than that of winter which had been left half-open. It was the door of the sepulchre. One could feel in these north winds the breath of cholera.

From a meteorological point of view these cold winds had the peculiarity that they did not exclude a strong electric tension. Fre-

quent storms, accompanied by lightning and thunder, broke out at this period.

One evening, when these north winds were blowing sharply, so sharply that January seemed to have returned, and the bourgeois had put on their cloaks again, little Gavroche, always shivering gayly under his rags, was standing as if in ecstasy before the shop of a hair-dresser in the neighborhood of the Orme-Saint-Gervais. He was adorned with a woman's woolen shawl, picked up no one knew where, of which he had made a comforter. Little Gavroche appeared to be profoundly admiring a waxen image of a bride, barenecked and wearing a wreath of orange flowers, which revolved behind the sash, exhibiting, between two lamps, its smiles to the passers-by; but in reality he was watching the shop in order to see whether he could not "crib" from the front a cake of soap, which he would afterwards sell for a sou to a "barber" in the suburbs. He often happened to breakfast on one of these cakes. He called this style of work, for which he had a talent, "shaving the barbers."

While contemplating the bride, and ogling the cake of soap, he growled between his teeth: "Tuesday. This is not Tuesday. Is it Tuesday? It is perhaps Tuesday. Yes, it is Tuesday."

It was never known to what this monologue referred.

If, perchance, this monologue had reference to the last time he had dined, that was three days ago, for now it was Friday.

The barber, in his shop warmed with a good stove, was shaving a customer and casting from time to time a side-glance at this enemy, at this frost-bitten and impudent gamin, who had his two hands in his pockets, but his mind evidently out of its sheath.

While Gavroche was examining the bride, the window, and the Windsor-soap, two children of unequal height, very decently dressed, and still smaller than himself, one apparently seven years of age, the other five, timidly turned the knob of the door and entered the shop, asking for something, charity possibly, in a plaintive murmur, which more resembled a sob than a prayer. They both spoke at once, and their words were unintelligible, because sobs choked the voice of the younger, and because the cold made the teeth of the elder chatter. The barber turned with a furious face, and without laying down his razor, crowding back the elder with his left hand, and the smaller one with his knee, pushed them into the street, and reclosed the door, saying:

"To come and chill everybody for nothing!"

The two children set out again, walking and crying. Meanwhile a cloud had come up, it began to rain.

Little Gavroche ran up to them, and accosted them:

"What's the matter with you, brats?"

"We don't know where to sleep," replied the elder.

"Is that all?" said Gavroche. "That's a great matter. Does anybody cry for that? Are they canary-birds then!"

And assuming through his superiority, which was a little bantering, an air of softened authority and of gentle protection:

"*Momacques*, come with me."

"Yes, monsieur," said the elder.

And the two children followed him as they would have followed an archbishop. They left off crying.

Gavroche led them up the Rue Saint-Antoine, in the direction of the Bastille.

Gavroche, as he marched off, cast an indignant and retrospective glance at the shop of the barber.

"He has no heart, that *merlan* (that barber)," growled he. "He's an Englisher."

A girl seeing the three walking in file, Gavroche at the head, broke into a loud laugh. This laugh was wanting in respect to the group.

"Good-day, Mamselle Omnibus," said Gavroche to her.

A moment after, the hair-dresser returning to his memory, he added:

"I made a mistake about the animal; he is not a *merlan* (a whiting), he's a snake. Barber, I'll go and fetch a locksmith, and I'll order him to put a rattle on your tail."

This barber had made him aggressive. He apostrophized, as he stepped across a gutter, a portress with a beard and worthy to meet Faust on the Brocken, who was holding her broom in her hand.

"Madame," said he to her, "you have come out with your horse, then?"

And after this he splashed the polished boots of a passer-by.

"Blackguard!" cried the passer-by, furiously.

Gavroche raised his nose above his shawl.

"Monsieur complains?"

"Of you!" said the passer-by.

"The bureau is closed," said Gavroche, "I receive no more complaints."

Meanwhile, continuing up the street, he noticed quite frozen in a court-yard a beggar-girl of thirteen or fourteen years of age, whose clothes were so short that she showed her knees. The little girl was beginning to grow too tall a girl for that. Growth plays you

such tricks. The petticoat becomes short at that moment when nudity becomes indecent.

"Poor girl!" said Gavroche. "She hasn't even a pair of breeches. Here, collar this."

And, taking off all the good wool which he had around his neck, he threw it over the thin and violet shoulders of the beggar-girl, where the comforter became again a shawl.

The little girl looked at him with an astonished air, and received the shawl in silence. At a certain stage of distress, the poor man, in his stupor, no longer groans at evil, and no longer returns thanks for kindness.

This done:

"Brrr!" said Gavroche, shivering worse than Saint Martin, who, at any rate, retained for himself one-half of his cloak.

At this brrr! the shower, redoubling its fury, became violent. Those wicked skies punish good actions.

"Ah!" cried Gavroche, "what's the meaning of this? it is raining again! Good God, if this continues, I withdraw my subscription."

And he continued his walk.

"It's all the same," said he, casting a glance at the beggar-girl who was crouching under his shawl, "there's somebody who has got a famous skin."

And, looking at the clouds, he cried:

"Tricked!"

The two children limped along behind him.

As they passed before one of those thick grated lattices which indicates the shop of a baker, for bread like gold is kept behind iron gratings, Gavroche turned round:

"Ah, *mômes*, have you dined?"

"Monsieur," answered the elder, "we have had nothing to eat since early this morning."

"You haven't then either father or mother?" replied Gavroche, majestically.

"I beg your pardon, monsieur, we have a papa and a mamma, but we don't know where they are."

"Sometimes that is better than knowing," said Gavroche, who was a thinker.

"See there," continued the elder, "it is two hours we have been walking about, we have looked for things at the corners of the streets, but we have found nothing."

"I know," said Gavroche. "The dogs eat everything."

He resumed after a silence:

"Ah! we have lost our authors. We don't know what we have done with them. That won't do at all, gamins. It is stupid to get lost like that for people of any age. Ah, well! for all that we must find a shake-down."

However, he did not ask them any more questions. To be without a home, what could be more natural?

The elder of the two *mômes* who had almost entirely recovered the quick carelessness of childhood, made this exclamation:

"It is funny all the same. Mamma who had said that she would take us to fetch blessed box, on Palm Sunday."

"*Neurs*," replied Gavroche.

"Mamma," added the elder, "is a lady who lives with Mamselle Miss."

"*Tanflute!*" added Gavroche.

Meanwhile he had stopped, and for some minutes had been groping and fumbling in all sorts of corners which he had in his rags.

At length he raised his head with an air which only wished to be one of satisfaction, but which was in reality triumphant:

"Calm yourselves, *momignards*. Here is what is supper for three."

And he drew from one of his pockets a sou.

Without giving the two little ones time to feel amazed, he pushed them both before him into the shop of the baker, and laid his sou on the counter, exclaiming:

"Garçon! five centimes' worth of bread."

The baker, who was the master in person, took up a loaf and a knife.

"In three pieces, garçon!" remarked Gavroche, and he added with dignity:

"We are three."

And seeing that the baker, after having examined the three supper-eaters, had taken up a loaf of black bread, he profoundly thrust his finger into his nose, with a sniff as imperious as if he had had the great Frederick's pinch of snuff at the end of his thumb, and cast at the baker, full in the face, this indignant apostrophe:

"*Keksekca?*" (Whatsasyouav?)

Those of our readers who might be tempted to see in this interpellation of Gavroche to the baker a Russian or Polish word, or one of the savage cries which the Iowas and the Botocudos hurl at each other from one bank of a river to the other in their solitudes, are warned that this is a word which they use every day (they, our readers) and which takes the place of this phrase: *qu'est ce que c'est que cela?* (What–is–that–you–have?) The baker comprehended perfectly, and replied:

"Why! it is bread, very good bread of the second quality."

"You mean to say *larton brutal* (black bread)," remarked Gavroche, calm and coldly disdainful. "*Larton savonné* (white bread), garçon! I stand treat."

The baker could not refrain from smiling,

and while cutting some white bread gazed at them in a compassionate way which offended Gavroche.

"Ah, well, baker's-man!" said he, "what is there about us that you fathom us in that way?"

All three placed end to end would hardly have made one fathom.

When the bread was cut, the baker put the sou in the till, and Gavroche said to the two children:

"*Morfilez.*"

The little boys looked at him confounded.

Gavroche burst into a laugh:

"Ah! hold, that's true, they don't understand yet, they are so little."

And he continued:

"Eat."

At the same time he gave each of them a lump of bread.

And thinking that the elder, who appeared to him more worthy of his conversation, merited some special encouragement, and ought to be disembarrassed of any hesitation about satisfying his appetite, he added, as he gave him the larger lump:

"Stick that into your gun."

There was one piece a little smaller than the other two; he took that for himself.

The poor children were starving, Gavroche included. While they were tearing their

bread with their beautiful teeth, they blocked up the shop of the baker, who, now that he was paid, looked at them angrily.

"Let us return to the street," said Gavroche.

They started again in the direction of the Bastille.

From time to time, as they were passing before the fronts of the lighted shops, the younger boy stopped to see what o'clock it was by a leaden watch hung round his neck by a string.

"Well, decidedly, he's very much a canary," said Gavroche.

Then, pensive, he growled between his teeth:

"It's all the same, if I had *mômes* of my own, I would hug them tighter than that."

As they were finishing their pieces of bread, and approaching the corner of that morose Rue des Ballets, at the end of which is seen the low and hostile wicket of La Force:

"Hilloh, is that you, Gavroche?" said some one.

"Hilloh, is that you, Montparnasse?" said Gavroche.

It was a man who had just accosted the gamin, and this man was no other than Montparnasse disguised with blue spectacles, but recognizable by Gavroche.

"Rascal!" pursued Gavroche, "you have a peel of the color of a linseed poultice and blue spectacles like a doctor. You are in style, on the word of an old man!"

"Chut," said Montparnasse, "not so loud!"

And he quickly dragged Gavroche out of the light of the shops.

The two little boys followed mechanically, holding each other by the hand.

When they were under the black arch of a court-yard, sheltered from the sight and from the rain:

"Do you know where I am going?" demanded Montparnasse.

"To the Abbey of *Monte-à-Regret* (to the Scaffold)," said Gavroche.

"Joker!"

And Montparnasse added:

"I am going to meet Babet."

"Ah!" said Gavroche, "her name is Babet."

Montparnasse lowered his voice:

"Not her, his."

"Ah, Babet!"

"Yes, Babet."

"I thought he was buckled up."

"He has unfastened the buckle," replied Montparnasse.

And he hurriedly told the gamin that, on the

morning of that very day, Babet, while being transferred to the Conciergerie, had escaped by turning to the left instead of turning to the right in the "corridor of the 'Instruction.'"

Gavroche admired his skill.

"What a dentist!" said he.

Montparnasse added a few details about Babet's escape, and ended with:

"Oh! that is not all."

Gavroche, while talking, had seized a cane which Montparnasse held in his hand, he mechanically pulled at the upper part, and the blade of a dagger became visible.

"Ah!" said he, pushing the dagger back quickly, "you have brought your gendarme disguised as a bourgeois."

Montparnasse winked his eye.

"The deuce!" continued Gavroche, "are you going then to have a turn-up with the *cognes* (the slops)?"

"We don't know," answered Montparnasse with an indifferent air. "It's always well to have a pin about you."

Gavroche insisted:

"What is it you are going to do to-night?"

Montparnasse took up afresh the serious line, and said, clipping his syllables:

"Some things."

And brusquely changing the conversation:

"By the way—!"

"What?"

"A story of the other day. Just fancy. I meet a bourgeois. He makes me a present of a sermon and of his purse. I put it in my pocket. One minute later I feel in my pocket. There is nothing there."

"Except the sermon," said Gavroche.

"But you," replied Montparnasse, "where are you going now?"

Gavroche showed his two protégés, and said:

"I am going to put these children to bed."

"Where do they sleep?"

"At my house."

"Where have you a house?"

"At my house."

"You have a lodging then?"

"Yes, I lodge."

"And where do you lodge?"

"Inside the elephant," said Gavroche.

Montparnasse, although by nature not easily astonished, could not restrain an exclamation:

"Inside the elephant!"

"Well, yes, inside the elephant!" retorted Gavroche. "*Kekcaa?*" (Whatsamathruthat?)

This is another word of that language which nobody writes and everybody in the world speaks. *Kekcaa* signifies: *qu'est-ce que cela a?* (What-is-the-matter-with-that?)

The profound observation of the gamin

brought Montparnasse back to calmness and to good sense. He seemed to return to more respectful sentiments of the lodgings of Gavroche.

"Indeed!" said he, "yes, the elephant. Are you well off there?"

"Very well," replied Gavroche. "There, truly, *chenument*. There are no draughts as there are under the bridges."

"How do you get in?"

"I get in."

"There is a hole then?" demanded Montparnasse.

"Parbleu! But it mustn't be told. It is between the fore legs. The *coqueurs* (the police) have not seen it."

"And you climb up? Yes, I understand."

"All sleight of hand, cric, crac, it's done, all alone."

After a pause Gavroche added:

"For these little ones I shall have a ladder."

Montparnasse burst into a laugh.

"Where the devil did you pick up those brats?"

Gavroche answered with simplicity:

"They are some *momichards* of which a barber made me a present."

Meanwhile Montparnasse had become pensive.

"You recognized me very easily," murmured he.

He took from his pocket two little objects, which were nothing but two quills wrapped in cotton, and thrust one into each nostril. This made him another nose.

"That changes you," said Gavroche, "you are less ugly, you ought to keep them in always."

Montparnasse was a handsome fellow, but Gavroche was a railer.

"Without joking," asked Montparnasse, "how do you like me now?"

It was also a different sound of voice. In the twinkling of an eye Montparnasse had become unrecognizable.

"Oh! play us Porrichinelle!" cried Gavroche.

The two lads, who had heard nothing up to this moment, engaged as they were in thrusting their fingers up their noses, approached close, at this name, and gazed at Montparnasse with a beginning of joy and admiration.

Unhappily Montparnasse was anxious.

He laid his hand on the shoulder of Gavroche, and said, dwelling on his words:

"Listen to what I tell you, boy, if I were on the Square, with my *dogue*, my *dague*, and my *digue* (my dog, my knife, and my wife),

and you were so prodigal as to offer me ten double sous I would not refuse to *goupiner* (to work), but we are not on *Mardi Gras* (at Shrove Tuesday)."

This grotesque sentence produced on the gamin a singular effect. He turned round sharply, looked with his little bright eyes with profound attention all around him, and noticed a few steps off a policeman with his back turned to them. Gavroche let slip from him: "Ah, good!" which he instantly repressed, and shaking the hand of Montparnasse:

"Well, good-night," said he, "I am off to my elephant with my *mômes*. On the supposition that you will need me some night, you can come and find me there. I lodge in the second story. There's no porter. You would ask for Monsieur Gavroche."

"All right," said Montparnasse.

And they parted, Montparnasse going toward the Grève, and Gavroche toward the Bastille. The little one of five years of age, dragged on by his brother, whom Gavroche dragged, turned his head back many times to watch "Porrichinelle" go away.

The unintelligible phrase by which Montparnasse had warned Gavroche of the presence of the policeman contained no other talisman than the syllable *dig* repeated five or six times under various forms. This syllable, *dig*, not

pronounced separately, but artistically mingled with the words of a sentence, means: *Take care, we cannot speak freely.* There was also in Montparnasse's remark a literary beauty which escaped Gavroche, that is, *mon dogue, ma dague, et ma digue,* a phrase of the argot (slang) of the Temple, which signifies *my dog, my knife, and my wife,* very much used among the Pitres and the Queues-Rouges of the great century in which Molière wrote and in which Callot designed.

Twenty years back there might have been seen in the south-eastern corner of the Place de la Bastille, near the canal-basin dug in the old moat of the prison-citadel, a grotesque monument, which has already been effaced from the memory of Parisians, and which is worthy to have left some trace, for it was an idea of a "member of the Institute, General-in-chief of the Army of Egypt."

We say monument, though it was only a small rough model. But this rough model itself, a prodigious sketch, a vast carcass of a Napoleonic idea which two or three successive puffs of wind had carried away and thrown each time farther from us, had become historic, and assumed something definitive, which contrasted with its provisional appearance. It was an elephant, forty feet high, constructed of frame-work and masonry, bearing on its

back a castle which resembled a house, once painted green by some plasterer, now painted black by the heavens, the rain, and the weather. In this deserted and uncovered corner of the Square the broad front of the colossus, its trunk, its tusks, its castle, its enormous hind-quarters, its four feet like columns, produced at night, under the starlit sky, a surprising and terrible outline. No one knew what it meant. It seemed a sort of symbol of the popular strength. It was gloomy, enigmatical and immense. It was some powerful phantom, visible and standing by the side of the invisible spectre of the Bastille.

Few strangers visited this edifice, no passer-by looked at it. It was falling into ruin; every season the mortar which was detached from its flanks made horrible wounds upon it. The "Ediles," as they were called in the fashionable slang, had forgotten it since 1814. It stood there in its corner, gloomy, diseased, crumbling away, surrounded by rotting palings, continually besmeared by drunken drivers; yawning cracks creviced its belly, a lath stuck out from its tail, tall grass grew between its legs; and as the level of the Square had risen during the last thirty years all about it with that slow and continuous movement which insensibly elevates the soil of great cities, it was in a hollow, and it seemed

as if the earth were sinking beneath it. It was impure, scorned, repulsive, and superb, ugly in the eyes of the bourgeois, melancholy in the eyes of the thinker. It had something about it of that ordure which is swept away, and something of that majesty which is decapitated.

As we have said, at night, its appearance changed. Night is the true medium of everything which is shadow. So soon as twilight set in the old elephant was transfigured; it assumed a tranquil and redoubtable form in the fearful serenity of the darkness. Being of the past it belonged to night; and this obscurity suited its grandeur.

This monument rude, squat, heavy, rough, austere, almost deformed, but most assuredly majestic, and imprinted with a sort of magnificent and savage seriousness, has disappeared to allow the sort of gigantic stove, adorned with its stove-pipe, to reign in peace, which has replaced the sombre fortress with its nine towers, much in the same way as the bourgeoisie replaces feudalism. It is very simple that a stove should be the symbol of an epoch in which a saucepan contains the power. This period will pass away, it is already passing away; people are beginning to understand that if there may be force in a boiler there can only be power in a brain; in other terms, that what leads and controls the

world, is not locomotives, but ideas. Attach locomotives to ideas, that is all right; but do not take the horse for the horseman.

However this may be, to return to the Place de la Bastille, the architect of the elephant, with plaster, had managed to produce something grand; the architect of the stove-pipe has succeeded in making something petty out of bronze.

This stove-pipe, which was baptized with a sonorous name, and called the Column of July, this would-be monument of an abortive revolution, was still wrapped up, in 1832, in an immense frame-work covering, which we regret for our part, and a vast enclosure of planks, which completed the isolation of the elephant.

It was to this corner of the Square, which was scarce lighted by the reflection of a distant oil lamp, that the gamin led the two "*mômes.*"

It must be permitted us to stop here, and declare that we are within the simple truth, and that twenty years ago the correctional tribunals would have had to condemn, under prevention of vagabondage and for destruction of a public monument, a boy who was discovered sleeping in the interior of the elephant of the Bastille.

This fact stated, we continue.

On coming near the colossus Gavroche comprehended the effect which the infinitely great may produce on the infinitely little, and said:

"Brats! don't be frightened."

Then he went through a hole in the palings into the inclosure of the elephant, and helped the *mômes* to pass through the breach. The two lads, a little frightened, followed Gavroche without saying a word, and trusted themselves to this little Providence in rags who had given them bread and promised them a lodging.

Lying by the side of the fence was a ladder which by day was used by the workmen at the neighboring wood-yard. Gavroche raised it with singular vigor, and placed it against one of the elephant's fore legs. About the point where the ladder ended, a sort of black hole could be distinguished in the belly of the colossus.

Gavroche showed the ladder and the hole to his guests, and said to them:

"Get up and get in."

The two little boys looked at each other in terror.

"You are afraid, *mômes!*" exclaimed Gavroche.

And he added:

"You shall see."

He clung round the wrinkled foot of the elephant, and in a twinkle of the eye, without

deigning to employ the ladder, he reached the hole. He went in as an adder glides into a hole, and disappeared, and a moment after the two children saw his pallid face, like a white and livid form, on the edge of the hole full of darkness.

"Well," cried he, "come up, *momignards*! you will see how nice it is! Come up, you!" said he to the elder, "I will give you a hand."

The little boys nudged each other, for the gamin made them afraid and reassured them at the same time, and then it was raining very hard. The elder risked it. The younger, seeing his brother go up and himself left all alone between the feet of this great beast, had a great mind to cry, but did not dare.

The elder climbed up the rungs of the ladder in a very tottering way; Gavroche, while he was on his way, encouraged him with the exclamations of a fencing-master to his pupils, or of a muleteer to his mules:

"Don't be afraid!"

"That's it!"

"Come on!"

"Put your foot there!"

"Your hand here!"

"Be plucky!"

And when he came within reach he quickly and vigorously seized him by the arm, and drew him to him.

"Swallowed!" said he.

The *môme* had passed through the crevice.

"Now," said Gavroche, "wait for me. Monsieur, have the goodness to sit down."

And going out by the crevice in the same way as he had come in, he let himself glide with the agility of a monkey down the leg of the elephant, dropped upon his feet on the grass, seized the little one of five years of age by the waist and planted him half-way up the ladder, then he began to ascend behind him crying to the elder:

"I'll push him, you pull him."

In an instant the little fellow was lifted, pushed, dragged, pulled, stuffed, crammed into the hole without having had time to know where he was, and Gavroche, entering after him, kicked back the ladder, which fell on the grass, began to clap his hands and cried:

"Here we are! Long live General Lafayette!"

This explosion over, he added:

"Brats, you are in my house."

Gavroche was, in fact, at home.

Oh, unexpected utility of the useless! charity of great things! goodness of the giants! This huge monument, which had contained a thought of the emperor, had become the box of a gamin. The *môme* had

been accepted and sheltered by the colossus. The bourgeois in their Sunday clothes who passed by the elephant of the Bastille frequently said, as they measured it with a contemptuous look from goggle-eyes: "What's the use of that?" It served to save from cold, from frost, from hail, from rain, to protect from the winter wind, to preserve from sleeping in the mud, which entails fever, and from sleeping in the snow, which brings death, a little being without father, without mother, without bread, without clothes, without asylum. It served to receive the innocent, whom society repulsed. It served to diminish the public wrong. It was a lair opened to him against whom all doors were closed. It seemed as if the old wretched mastodon, attacked by vermin and oblivion, covered with warts, mould, and ulcers, tottering, crumbling, abandoned, condemned, a species of colossal beggar asking in vain the alms of a benevolent glance in the middle of the highway, had taken pity on this other beggar, the poor pigmy who walked about without shoes on his feet, without a ceiling over his head, blowing his fingers, dressed in rags, fed upon what is thrown away. This was the use of the elephant of the Bastille. This idea of Napoleon's, disdained by men, had been taken up again by God. What had only been illustrious had become august.

The emperor would have needed, in order to realize what he meditated, porphyry, brass, iron, gold, marble; for God the old collection of planks, beams, and plaster sufficed. The emperor had had a dream of genius; in this Titanic elephant, armed, prodigious, raising its trunk, bearing its castle, and spouting all around glad and living waters, he wished to incarnate the people; God had made of it a greater thing, He had lodged a child in it.

The hole by which Gavroche entered was a breach hardly visible from the outside, as it was concealed, as we have said, under the belly of the elephant, and so narrow that hardly anything but cats and *mômes* could pass through it.

"Let us begin," said Gavroche, "by telling the porter that we are not at home."

And plunging into the darkness with certainty, like a man who knows his apartment, he took a plank and stopped up the hole.

Gavroche plunged again into the darkness. The children heard the phizzing of a match dipped into the bottle of phosphorus. Lucifer matches did not yet exist; the Fumade tinder-box represented progress at that day.

A sudden light made them wink; Gavroche had lit one of those rope's-ends soaked in resin which are called cellar-rats. The cellar-

rat, which smoked more than it illumined, rendered the inside of the elephant indistinctly visible.

The two guests of Gavroche looked around them, and had much such a feeling as anyone would feel if shut up in the great tun of Heidelberg, or, better still, what Jonas must have experienced in the biblical belly of the whale. An entire gigantic skeleton appeared to them and enveloped them. Above, a long brown beam, from which sprang at regular distances massive cross bars, represented the vertebral column with its ribs, stalactites of plaster hung down like the viscera, and from one side to the other huge spider webs made dusty diaphragms. Here and there in corners could be seen large blackish spots which had the appearance of being alive, and which changed places rapidly, with a quick and startled movement.

The pieces which had fallen from the back of the elephant upon its belly had filled up the concavity, so that it was possible to walk on it as upon a floor.

The youngest lad hugged close to his brother, and said in a low tone:

"It is dark."

This remark caused Gavroche to cry out. The petrified air of the two *mômes* rendered a shock necessary.

"What's that you've got in your head?"

shouted he. "Are we humbugging? are we coming the disgusted? do you want the Tuileries? Are you brutes? Say. I warn you I don't belong to the regiment of ninnies. Ah, ah, do you think yourselves the brats of the mustard-maker of the Pope?"

A little roughness is good in terror. It reassures. The two children drew nearer to Gavroche.

Gavroche, paternally softened by this confidence, passed from "the grave to the sweet," and addressing himself to the younger:

"Tom-fool," said he, accenting the insult with a caressing tone, "it is outside that it's dark. Outside it rains, here it does not rain; outside it is cold, here there is not a breath of wind; outside there is a heap of people, here there's nobody; outside there's not even the moon, here there's my candle, deuce take it all."

The two children began to look round the apartment with less terror; but Gavroche did not allow them much longer leisure for contemplation.

"Quick," said he.

And he thrust them toward what we are very happy to be able to call the bottom of the chamber.

His bed was there.

Gavroche's bed was complete. That is to

say, there was a mattress, a coverlet, and an alcove with curtains.

The mattress was a straw mat, the coverlet was a rather wide wrapper of coarse, gray wool, very warm, and nearly new. This is what the alcove was like.

Three rather long laths sunk and firmly driven into the rubbish of the floor, that is to say, the elephant's belly, two in front, one behind, and fastened by a cord at the top, so as to form a pyramidal frame. This frame supported a grating of brass wire, which was simply laid upon it, but artistically applied and kept in place by fastenings of iron wire, so that it entirely surrounded the three laths. A row of large stones was fixed all around this trellis-work on the ground, so that nothing could pass. The trellis was nothing more than a piece of those copper nettings which are used to cover aviaries in menageries. Gavroche's bed was under the wire-work as in a cage. The whole resembled the tent of an Esquimau.

It was this trellis which took the place of curtains.

Gavroche removed the stones a little which held down the trellis in front; the two folds of the trellis which lay one over the other opened.

"*Mômes,* on all fours!" said Gavroche.

He made his guests enter the cage cautiously, then he went in after them, creeping, pulled back the stones and hermetically closed the opening.

They were all three stretched upon the mat.

Small as they were not one of them could stand upright in the alcove. Gavroche still held the cellar-rat in his hand.

"Now," said he, "to roost! I am going to suppress the candelabra."

"Monsieur," said the elder of the two brothers to Gavroche, pointing to the trellis, "what is that?"

"That," said Gavroche, gravely, "is on account of the rats. To roost!"

Still he thought himself obliged to add a few words for the instruction of these beings of a tender age, and he continued:

"It is one of some things from the Jardin des Plantes. It is employed to guard ferocious animals. *Gniena* (It is a whole) storehouse full. *Gnia* (It is only) to climb over a wall, to crawl through a window, and to pass under a door. You can have as much as you want."

While speaking he wrapped a fold of the coverlet all round the little one, who murmured:

"Oh, that's good! that's warm!"

Gavroche fixed a satisfied eye upon the coverlet.

"That also comes from the Jardin des Plantes," said he. "I nobbled that from the monkeys."

And pointing out to the elder the mat on which he was lying, a mat very thick and admirably made, he added:

"That belonged to the giraffe."

After a pause he continued:

"The beasts had all that. I took it from them. They were not at all angry. I told them: 'It is for the elephant.'"

He was silent again, then resumed:

"You climb over the walls and make fun of the government. That's all."

The two children gazed with a timid and stupefied respect at this intrepid and inventive being, a vagabond like them, isolated like them, wretched like them, who had something admirable and omnipotent about him, who appeared to them supernatural, and whose physiognomy was composed of all the grimaces of an old mountebank, mingled with the most natural and most charming smile.

"Monsieur," said the elder lad, timidly, "you are not afraid then of the police?"

Gavroche limited himself to answering:

"*Môme!* we don't say the police, we say *cognes.*"

The younger had his eyes wide open, but said nothing. As he was at the edge of the

mat, the elder being in the centre, Gavroche tucked in the coverlet round him as a mother would have done, and raised the mat under his head with old rags, so as to make a pillow for the *môme*. Then he turned to the elder.

"Well? it is pretty jolly here!"

"Ah, yes!" answered the elder as he looked at Gavroche with the expression of a saved angel.

The two poor little children, who were wet through, began to grow warm again.

"By the by," continued Gavroche, "why were you blubbering?"

And pointing out the little one to his brother:

"A brat like that, I don't say no; but a tall chap like you to cry, is silly; it makes you look like a calf."

"Bless me," said the lad, "we had no lodging, no place to go to."

"Brat!" remarked Gavroche, "we don't say lodging, we say *piolle* (a ken)."

"And then we felt afraid of being all alone like that in the night."

"We don't say night, we say *sorgue*."

"Thank you, monsieur," said the child.

"Listen to me," Gavroche went on, "you must never whine for anything. I'll take care of you. You'll see what fun we shall have. In the summer, we'll go to the Glacière with

Navet, a comrade of mine, we'll bathe in the Basin, we'll run about naked on the timber floats in front of the bridge of Austerlitz, that makes the washerwomen rage. They yell, they scold, if you only knew how funny they are! We'll go to see the skeleton man. He's alive. At the Champs Elysées. That parishioner is as thin as anything. And then I will take you to the play. I'll take you to Frederick Lemaître. I have tickets, I know the actors, I have even played myself once in a piece. We were *mômes*, so high, who ran about under a cloth, that made the sea. I will get you an engagement at my theatre. We will go and see the savages. They are not real, those savages. They have red tights which wrinkle, and you can see holes sewn up at their elbows with white thread. After that we will go to the Opera. We will go in with the claqueurs. The claque at the Opera is very select. I wouldn't go with the claque on the boulevards. At the Opera, just fancy, there are people who pay twenty sous, but they are noodles. We call them dishclouts. And, then, we will go and see the guillotining. I'll point out the executioner. He lives in the Rue des Marais. Monsieur Sanson. He's got a letter-box at his door. Ah! we shall amuse ourselves famously."

At this moment a drop of pitch fell on the

finger of Gavroche, and recalled him to the realities of life.

"The devil!" said he, "there's the match used up. Attention! I can't afford more than a sou a month for lighting. When people go to bed they are expected to sleep. We haven't the time to read the romances of Monsieur Paul de Kock. Besides, the light might pass through the crevices of the 'court-yard,' and the *cognes* might see it."

"And then," timidly observed the elder, who alone dared to speak to Gavroche and answer him, "a spark might fall on the straw, we ought to be careful not to burn the house up."

"You mustn't say 'burn the house up,'" said Gavroche, you must say *riffauder le bocard* (blaze the crib)."

The storm redoubled. Through the peals of thunder the rain could be heard beating against the back of the colossus.

"Peg away, rain!" said Gavroche. "It amuses me to hear the water bottle pouring down the legs of the house. Winter's a fool; he throws away his goods, he loses his trouble, he can't drown us, and that makes him growl, the old water-carrier."

This allusion to the thunder, of which Gavroche, in his quality of a nineteenth-century philosopher, accepted all the consequences,

was followed by a lengthened flash, so dazzling that a portion of it showed through the crevice in the belly of the elephant. Almost at the same moment the thunder roared, and very furiously. The two little ones uttered a cry and rose so quickly that the brass grating was almost thrown down; but Gavroche turned toward them his bold face, and profited by the clap of thunder to burst into a laugh.

"Be calm, children. Don't upset the edifice. That's fine thunder, of the right sort! That wasn't any fool of a flash. Bravo, Good God! by jinks! it is almost as fine as at the Ambigu."

This said, he restored order in the grating, softly pushed the two children to the head of the bed, pressed their knees to make them lie at full length, and cried:

"Since the Good God is lighting his candle, I can put out mine. Children, we must sleep, my young humans. It's very bad not to sleep. It would make you *schlinguer* in your strainer, or, as the big-bugs say, stink in your jaws. Wrap yourselves well up in the peel! I'm going to extinguish. Are you all right?"

"Yes," murmured the elder, "I'm all right. I feel as if I had feathers under my head."

"You mustn't say 'head,'" cried Gavroche, "you must say *tronche* (nut)"

The two children hugged close together. Gavroche finished arranging all right on the mat, and pulled the coverlet up to their ears, then he repeated for the third time that injunction in the hieratic language:

"*Pioncez!*" (Roost!)

And he blew out the candle.

The light was scarce extinguished ere a singular trembling began to agitate the trellis-work under which the three children were lying. It was a multitude of dull rubbings which produced a metallic sound, as if claws and teeth were grinding the copper wire. This was accompanied by all sorts of little shrill cries.

The little boy of five years of age, hearing this hubbub above his head, and chilled with terror, nudged his elder brother, but the elder brother was already *pioncé* (was roosting), as Gavroche had ordered him. Then the little one, losing his fear of him, dared to address Gavroche, but in a very low voice and holding his breath:

"Monsieur?"

"Hey?" said Gavroche, who had just closed his eyes.

"What is that?"

"It's the rats," replied Gavroche.

And he laid his head again on the mat.

The rats in truth, which swarmed by thou-

sands in the carcass of the elephant, and were the live black spots of which we have spoken, had been held in awe by the flame of the candle so long as it was alight, but so soon as this cavern, which was, as it were, their city, had been restored to night, sniffing what that famous story-teller, Perrault, calls "some fresh meat," they had rushed in a mob upon the tent of Gavroche, had climbed to the top, and were biting the meshes, as if trying to pierce through this novel sort of trap.

Meanwhile the little one did not sleep.

"Monsieur?" he began again.

"Hey?" said Gavroche.

"What are the rats?"

"They're mice."

This explanation slightly reassured the child. He had seen some white mice in the course of his life, and had not been afraid of them. However, he raised his voice again:

"Monsieur?"

"Hey?" replied Gavroche.

"Why don't you have a cat?"

"I had one," answered Gavroche, "I brought one here, but they ate it up for me."

This second explanation undid the work of the first, and the little one began trembling again. The dialogue between him and Gavroche was resumed for the fourth time.

"Monsieur?"

"Hey?"

"Who was it that was eaten up?"

"The cat."

"Who was it that ate the cat?"

"The rats."

"The mice?"

"Yes, the rats."

The child, terrified by these mice which ate the cats, continued:

"Monsieur, would those mice eat us?"

"Pardi!" said Gavroche.

The terror of the child was at its height. But Gavroche added:

"Don't be afraid! they can't get in. And, then, I am here! Stay, take my hand. Hold your tongue and *pioncé* (roost)!"

Gavroche at the same time took the hand of the little one across his brother. The child pressed this hand against his body and felt reassured. Courage and strength have mysterious communications. Silence had set in again around them, the sound of voices had startled and driven away the rats; when they returned a few minutes later and furiously attacked, the three *mômes*, plunged in sleep, heard nothing more.

The hours of the night passed away. Darkness covered the immense Place de la Bastille, a winter wind, which mingled with the rain, blew in gusts, the patrols examined doors,

alleys, enclosures, dark corners, and, searching for nocturnal vagabonds, passed silently before the elephant; the monster, erect, motionless, its eyes open in the darkness, had the appearance of dreaming, as if satisfied at its good deed, and sheltered from the sky and from men the three poor sleeping children.

To understand what follows it must be remembered that at this period the guard-house of the Bastille was situated at the other end of the Square, and what took place near the elephant could neither be seen nor heard by the sentinel.

Toward the end of the hour which immediately precedes daybreak, a man turned out of the Rue Saint-Antoine, running, crossed the Square, went round the great enclosure of the Column of July, and glided between the palisades under the belly of the elephant. Had any light fallen on this man, from his thoroughly drenched state, it might have been divined that he had passed the night in the rain. Arrived under the elephant he uttered a grotesque cry, which belongs to no human language, and which a parrot alone could reproduce. He repeated this cry twice, of which the orthography here given hardly supplies any idea:

"Kirikikiou!"

At the second cry a clear, gay, and young voice answered from the belly of the elephant:

"Yes."

Almost immediately the plank that closed the hole was removed, and gave passage to a child, who descended along the elephant's leg and dropped lightly near the man. It was Gavroche. The man was Montparnasse.

As for the cry, *kirikikiou*, it was without doubt what the lad meant to say by: *You will ask for Monsieur Gavroche.*

On hearing it he had jumped up with a start, crept out of his "alcove" by moving the grating a little, which he had carefully closed again, after which he had opened the trap and had descended.

The man and the child silently recognized each other in the night; Montparnasse confined himself to saying:

"We want you. Come and give us a lift."

The gamin did not ask for any other explanation.

"Here I am," said he.

And the pair proceeded toward the Rue Saint-Antoine, whence Montparnasse had come, winding rapidly through the long file of market wagons which go down at that hour toward the market.

The market gardeners, lying on their wagons among their salads and vegetables, half asleep, rolled up to their eyes in the boots of their wagons, on account of the driving rain, did not even look at these strange passers-by.

III.

THE INCIDENTS OF AN ESCAPE

This is what had taken place this same night at La Force:

An escape had been concerted between Babet, Brujon, Gueulemer, and Thénardier, although Thénardier was in solitary confinement. Babet had done the business on his own account during the day, as we have seen from the account of Montparnasse to Gavroche. Montparnasse was to help them from without.

Brujon, having passed a month in a punishment-room had had time, first to make a rope, secondly, to perfect a plan. Formerly, these severe places, where the discipline of the prison delivers the prisoner to himself, were composed of four stone walls, a ceiling of stone, a pavement of tiles, a camp-bed, a grated skylight, a double iron door, and were called *dungeons;* but the dungeon had been considered too horrible; now it is composed of an iron door, a grated skylight, a

camp-bed, a pavement of tiles, a ceiling of stone, four stone walls, and it is called a *punishment-room*. A little daylight is visible about midday. The inconvenience of these rooms, which, as we see, are not dungeons, is to leave beings to think who ought to be made to work.

Brujon then had reflected, and he left the punishment-room with a cord. As he was reputed very dangerous in the Charlemagne yard, he was placed in the Bâtiment-Neuf. The first thing he found in the Bâtiment-Neuf was Gueulemer, the second was a nail; Gueulemer, that is to say, crime, a nail, that is to say, liberty.

Brujon, of whom it is time to form a complete idea, was, with an appearance of a delicate complexion and a deeply premeditated languor, a sprightly fellow, intelligent, and a robber, who possessed a caressing look and an atrocious smile. His look was the result of his will, and his smile the result of his nature. His first studies in his art were directed toward roofs; he had made a great improvement in the trade of lead-stealers, who strip roofings and carry away gutters by the process called *au-gras double* (getting double fat).

What rendered the moment favorable for an attempt to escape was that workmen were

taking off and relaying at this very moment a part of the slates of the prison. The Saint-Bernard yard was not absolutely isolated from the Charlemagne yard and from the Saint-Louis yard. There were on the roof scaffolding and ladders; in other words, bridges and stairways, on the side of deliverance.

The Bâtiment-Neuf, which was the most cracked and the most decrepit affair to be seen in the world, was the weak point of the prison. The walls were corroded to such an extent by saltpetre, that it had been found necessary to put up a facing of wood over the arches of the dormitories, because stones became detached and fell upon the prisoners in their beds. In spite of this antiquity, the error was committed of confining in the Bâtiment-Neuf the most dangerous of the accused, of placing in it the "hard cases," as they say in prison jargon.

The Bâtiment-Neuf contained four dormitories, one above the other, and a garret-floor called the Bel-Air. A large flue of a chimney, probably belonging to some old kitchen of the Ducs de la Force, started from the ground-floor, passed through the four stories, cut in two all the dormitories, in which it figured as a sort of flattened pillar, and went out through a hole in the roof.

Gueulemer and Brujon were in the same

dormitory. They had been placed through precaution on the ground-floor. Accident willed it that the head of their beds rested against the flue of the chimney.

Thénardier was exactly above their heads in the attic called Bel-Air.

The passer-by, who stops in the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catherine, beyond the barracks of the firemen, in front of the court-yard of the bath-house, sees a yard full of flowers and shrubs in boxes, at the further end of which is a little white rotunda with two wings, enlivened by green shutters, the bucolic dream of Jean-Jacques. Not more than ten years ago there rose above this rotunda a black wall, enormous, hideous, bare, against which it was built. This was the outer wall of La Force.

This wall behind this rotunda was Milton seen behind Berquin.

High though it was, this wall was surmounted by an even blacker roof which could be seen beyond. This was the roof of the Bâtiment-Neuf. You remarked in it four dormer windows protected by bars, these were the windows of the Bel-Air. A chimney passed through the roof; this was the chimney which passed through the dormitories.

The Bel-Air, this attic of the Bâtiment-Neuf, was a species of large garret-hall, closed with triple gratings and double sheet-iron doors,

studded with enormous nails. When you entered by the north end, you had on your left the four dormers, and on your right facing these dormers, four very large square and spacious cages, separated by narrow passages, built breast-high in masonry, and the rest to the roof with iron bars.

Thénardier had been in solitary confinement in one of these cages since the night of February 3. It was never discovered how, or by what connivance, he had succeeded in procuring and concealing a bottle of that wine, invented, it is said, by Desrues, in which a narcotic is mixed, and which the band of the *Endormeurs* has rendered celebrated.

There are in many of the prisons treacherous employés, half gaolers and half robbers, who assist in escapes, who sell to the police a faithless service, and who make the handle of the salad-basket dance (that is, make much more than their salary).

On this very night, then, when the little Gavroche had picked up the two straying children, Brujon and Gueulemer, who knew that Babet, who had escaped the same morning, was waiting for them in the street as well as Montparnasse, gently rose, and began breaking open with the nail that Brujon had found in the flue of the chimney which their beds touched. The rubbish fell on the bed of

Brujon, so that nobody heard it. The hail-storm mingled with the thunder shook the doors on their hinges, and made in the prison a frightful and useful uproar. Those prisoners who awoke pretended to fall asleep again, and left Brujon and Gueulemer to do as they pleased. Brujon was skilful; Gueulemer was vigorous. Before any sound had reached the watchman sleeping in the grated cell which had a window looking into the dormitory, the wall was pierced, the chimney scaled, the iron trellis-work which closed the upper opening of the flue forced, and the two formidable bandits on the roof. The rain and the wind redoubled, the roof was slippery.

"What a good *sorgue* for a *crampe!* (What a good night for an escape!)" said Brujon.

A gulf of six feet in width and eighty feet in depth separated them from the surrounding wall. At the bottom of this gulf they could see gleaming in the obscurity the musket of a sentry. They fastened by one end, to the stumps of the bars of the chimney which they had just wrenched off, the rope which Brujon had woven in his cell, threw the other end over the encircling wall, cleared the gulf with a bound, clung to the coping of the wall, bestraddled it, glided one after the other along the rope to a little roof which touches the bath-house, pulled their rope toward them,

jumped into the yard of the bath-house, crossed it, pushed open the porter's slide, near which hung the cord, pulled the cord, opened the gateway, and found themselves in the street.

It was not three-quarters of an hour since they had risen to their feet on the beds, in the darkness, their nail in hand, their plan in their heads.

A few moments after, they had rejoined Babet and Montparnasse, who were prowling in the neighborhood.

In drawing the rope to them they had broken it, and there was a piece remaining attached to the chimney on the roof. They had met with no other accident beyond almost entirely skinning their hands.

That night Thénardier had been warned, though it was impossible to discover how, and did not go to sleep.

Toward one o'clock in the morning, the night being very dark, he saw two shadows passing on the roof, in the rain and the raging wind, before the window opposite his cage. One stopped at the window just long enough for a look. It was Brujon. Thénardier recognized him, and understood. That was sufficient for him.

Thénardier, described as a burglar, and detained on the charge of a nocturnal ambuscade

by force of arms, was kept under constant watch. A sentry who was relieved every two hours walked with a loaded musket in front of his cage. The Bel-Air was lighted by a reflector. The prisoner had on his feet a pair of irons weighing fifty pounds. Every day at four o'clock in the afternoon, a turnkey, escorted by two dogs—such things still happened at that period—entered his cage, placed near his bed a black loaf of two pounds weight, a jug of water, and a bowlful of very thin soup, in which a few beans floated, inspected his irons and tapped the bars. This man with his dogs returned twice during the night.

Thénardier had obtained permission to keep a sort of iron spike which he used to nail his bread into a crack in the wall, "in order," said he, "to preserve it from the rats." As Thénardier was constantly in sight, no one found any danger in this spike. Still it was remembered at a later day that a turnkey had said, "It would be better only to leave him a wooden skewer."

At two o'clock in the morning the sentry, who was an old soldier, was relieved, and he was replaced by a conscript. A few minutes after, the man with the dogs, paid his visit, and went away without having noticed anything, except the extreme youth and "peasant

look " of the " tourlourou," the (green-horn). Two hours after, at four o'clock, when they came to relieve the conscript, they found him asleep, and lying on the ground, like a log by the side of the cage of Thénardier. As for Thénardier, he was no longer there. His broken irons were on the floor. There was a hole in the ceiling of his cage, and above it another hole in the roof. A plank of his bed had been torn out and doubtless carried off, for it could not anywhere be found. There was also seized in the cell a half-empty bottle, containing the rest of the drugged wine with which the soldier had been sent to sleep. The bayonet of the soldier had disappeared.

At the moment when all this was discovered, it was supposed that Thénardier was out of all reach. The reality was, that he was no longer in the Bâtiment-Neuf, but he was still in great danger.

Thénardier, on arriving at the roof of the Bâtiment-Neuf, had found the remainder of Brujon's rope hanging to the bars of the upper trap of the chimney, but this broken end was much too short, he was unable to cross over the encircling wall as Brujon and Gueulemer had done.

When you turn out of the Rue des Ballets into the Rue du Roi-de-Sicile, you notice

almost directly on the right a dirty recess. There was a house there in the last century, of which only the back wall remains, a genuine ruin of a wall, which rises to the height of a third story between the adjacent buildings. This ruin is recognizable by two large square windows, which may still be seen; the one in the middle, the nearest the right-hand gable, is barred by a worm-eaten joist fitted like the cap-piece of a shore. Through these windows could be seen, formerly, a lofty lugubrious wall, which was a portion of the outer wall of La Force.

The gap which the demolished house has left in the street is half filled by a hoarding of rotten planks, supported by five stone posts. In this enclosure is hidden a little shanty built against the still standing ruin. The hoarding has a door in it which, a few years ago, was closed only by a latch.

It was to the top of this ruin that Thénardier had reached a little after three o'clock in the morning.

How had he got there? This was never explained nor understood. . . The lightning flashes must at once have impeded and helped him. Did he use the ladders and the scaffolding of the slaters to get from roof to roof, from enclosure to enclosure, from compartment to compartment, over the buildings of the Char-

lemagne yard, then the buildings of the Saint-Louis yard, the encircling walls and from thence to the ruin on the Rue du Roi-de-Sicile? But there were in this route gaps which seemed to render it impossible. Had he laid the plank of his bed as a bridge from the roof of Bel-Air to the encircling wall, and had he crawled on his belly along the coping of the encircling wall all round the prison as far as the ruin? But the outer wall of La Force followed an indented and uneven line, it rose and fell, it sank down to the barracks of the firemen, it rose up to the bathing-house, it was cut by buildings, it was not of the same height on the Hotel Lamoignon as on the Rue Pavée, it had, everywhere, slopes and right angles; and then, the sentries must have seen the dark outline of the fugitive; on this supposition again the road taken by Thénardier remains almost inexplicable. By either way, an impossible flight. Had Thénardier, illuminated by that frightful thirst for liberty which changes precipices into moats, iron bars into reeds, a cripple into an athlete, a gouty person into a bird, stupidity into instinct, instinct into intellect, and intellect into genius, had Thénardier invented and improvised a third method? It has never been known.

It is not always possible to explain the mar-

vels of an escape. The man who escapes, let us repeat, is inspired; there is something of the star and of the lightning in the mysterious gleam of flight; the effort made for deliverance is not less surprising than the soaring toward the sublime; and we say of an escaped robber: "How did he manage to scale that roof?" just as we say of Corneille: "Where did he learn *That he would die?*"

However this may be, dripping with sweat, wet through with rain, his clothes in strips, his hands scarified, his elbows bleeding, his knees lacerated, Thénardier had reached what children in their figurative language call the *cutting* (or edge) of the wall of the ruin, he had stretched himself full length on it, and there his strength failed him. A perpendicular escarpment as high as a three-storied house separated him from the pavement of the street.

The rope he had was too short.

He was waiting there pale, exhausted, having lost all the hope which he had had, still covered by night, but saying to himself that daylight would soon come, horrified at the thought that he should in a few moments hear the neighboring clock of Saint-Paul strike four, the hour when some one would come to relieve the sentry, and when he would be found asleep under the broken roof, gazing with stupor, through the terrible depth, by the glimmer of

the street-lamps, at the wet and black pavement, that desired and terrific pavement which was death and which was liberty.

He asked himself whether his three accomplices in escape had succeeded, whether they were waiting for him, and if they would come to his help. He listened. Excepting a patrol, no one had passed through the street since he had been there. Nearly all the travel of the market gardeners from Montreuil, from Charonne, from Vincennes, and from Bercy to the market is through the Rue Saint-Antoine.

Four o'clock struck. Thénardier trembled. A few minutes after, the wild and confused noise which follows the discovery of an escape broke out in the prison. The sound of doors being opened and shut, the creaking of gates on their hinges, the tumult in the guard-house, the harsh calls of the gate-keepers, the clang of musket butts on the pavement of the yards, reached him. Lights moved up and down in the grated windows of the dormitories, a torch ran along the attic of the Bâtiment-Neuf, the firemen of the barracks alongside had been called. Their caps, which the torch lighted up in the rain, came and went along the roofs. At the same time Thénardier saw, in the direction of the Bastille, a livid gleam mournfully whitening the lower part of the sky.

He was on the top of a wall ten inches wide, lying out in the storm, with two gulfs at the right and at the left, unable to stir, a prey to dizziness from a possible fall, and to the horror of a certain arrest, and his mind, like the clapper of a bell, went from one of these ideas to the other: "Dead if I fall, caught if I remain."

In this anguish, he suddenly saw, the street being still wrapped in obscurity, a man, who was gliding along the walls and was coming from the direction of the Rue Pavée, stop in the recess above which Thénardier was, as it were, suspended. This man was joined by a second, who walked with the same precaution, then by a third, then by a fourth. When these men were collected, one of them raised the latch of the door in the hoarding, and all four entered the enclosure where the shanty is. They were exactly under Thénardier. These men had evidently chosen this recess to consult in, without being seen by any passers-by, or by the sentry who guards the wicket of La Force a few steps off. It must also be said that the rain kept this sentry blockaded in his sentry-box. Thénardier, unable to distinguish their faces, listened to their words with the desperate attention of a wretch who feels that he is lost.

Thénardier felt something pass before his

eyes which resembled hope, these men spoke *argot* (slang).

The first said in a low voice, but distinctly:

"*Décarrons* (Let us be off). What are we *maquillons icigo?* (What are we doing here?)"

The second replied:

"*Il lasquine* (It rains enough to put out) *le riffe du rabouin* (the fire of the devil). And then *les coqueurs* (the police) are going by, there is *un grivier* (a soldier there), who *porte gaffe* (is standing sentinel), are we going to let them *emballer icicaille* (arrest us here)?"

These two words, *icigo* and *icicaille*, which both mean *ici* (here), and which belong, the first to the *argot* of the Barrières, the second to the *argot* of the Temple, were rays of light for Thénardier. By *icigo* he recognized Brujon, who was a prowler of the Barrières, and by *icicaille*, Babet, who, among all his other trades, had been a second-hand clothes-dealer at the Temple.

The ancient *argot* of the age of Louis XIV. is now spoken only at the Temple, and Babet was the only one who spoke it in its purity. Without *icicaille*, Thénardier would not have recognized him, for he had completely disguised his voice.

In the meanwhile the third had intervened.

"Nothing presses yet, let us wait a little.

What is there to tell us that he does not want us?"

Through this, which was only French, Thénardier recognized Montparnasse, whose elegance was to understand all the *argots* and not to speak any of them.

As for the fourth, he held his tongue, but his huge shoulders betrayed him. Thénardier did not hesitate. It was Gueulemer.

Brujon replied almost impetuously, but still in a low voice:

"What is it you *nous bonis la* (tell us there)? The *tapissier* (innkeeper) couldn't *tirer sa crampe* (escape). He doesn't know *le truc* (the trade) indeed! *Bouliner sa limace* (To tear up his shirt), and *faucher ses empaffes* (cut up his bed-clothes), *pour maquiller une tortouse* (to make a rope), *caler des boulins aux lourdes* (to make holes in the doors), *braser des faffes* (to forge false papers), *maquiller des caroubles* (to make false keys), *faucher les durs* (to cut his irons), *balancer sa tortouse dehors* (to hang his rope outside), *se planquer* (to hide himself), *se camouffler* (to disguise himself), *il faut être mariol* (one must be a devil)! The old man couldn't do it, he don't know how *goupiner* (to work)!"

Babet added, still in the correct classic *argot* which Poulailler and Cartouche spoke, and which is to the bold, new, colored, and

hazardous *argot* which Brujon used what the language of Racine is to the language of André Chenier.

"Your *orgue tapissier* (innkeeper) must have been *fait marron dans l'escalier* (caught in the act). *Il faut être arcasien* (One must be a devil). He is *un galifard* (an apprentice). He has been *jouer l'harnache par un roussin* (duped by a spy), perhaps even by *un roussi* (a sheep), *qui lui aura battu comtois* (who has made him gossip). *Prête l'oche* (Listen), Montparnasse, do you hear *ces criblements dans le collège* (those cries in the prison)? You have seen all those *camoufles* (lights). He is retaken, come! He must be left to get his *vingt longes* (twenty years). I have *pas taf* (no fear), I am no *taffeur* (coward), *c'est colombé* (that is known), but there is nothing more to be done but *faire les lézards* (to make tracks), or otherwise we shall *gambiller* (dance) for it. *Ne renaude pas* (Don't be angry), come *avec nousiergue* (with us). Let us go, *picter une rouillarde encible* (to drink a bottle of old wine together)."

"Friends must not be left in a difficulty," growled Montparnasse.

"*Je te bonis qu'il est malade* (I tell you he's retaken)," replied Brujon. "*A l'heure qui toque* (At the present time), *le tapissier* (the innkeeper) isn't worth a *broque* (a sou)! We

can do nothing here. *Décarrons* (Let us go). I expect every moment that a *cogne* (a slop) will *me cintre en pogne* (have me in his clutches)!"

Montparnasse resisted now but feebly; the truth is that these four men, with that fidelity which bandits have of never abandoning one another, had prowled all night round La Force, at whatever risk, in the hope of seeing Thénardier appear on the top of some wall. But the night, which was becoming really too favorable, for it was a downpour that rendered all the streets deserted, the cold which was growing upon them, their dripping clothes, their worn-out shoes, the alarming noises which had broken out in the prison, the hours which had elapsed, the patrols they had met, the hope which had departed, the fear that had returned, all this urged them to retreat. Montparnasse himself, who was perhaps, in a certain sense, the son-in-law of Thénardier, yielded. In a moment they would be gone. Thénardier gasped on his wall like the shipwrecked crew of the *Méduse* on their raft, when they watched the ship which they had sighted, fade away on the horizon.

He did not dare to call to them, a cry overheard might ruin everything, he had an idea, a last idea, an inspiration; he took from his pocket the end of Brujon's rope which he had

detached from the chimney of the Bâtiment-Neuf, and threw it into the enclosure of the hoarding.

This cord fell at their feet.

"*Une veuve* (A cord)!" said Babet, in the argot of the Temple.

"*Ma tortouse* (My cord)!" said Brujon, in the argot of the Barrières.

"The innkeeper is there," said Montparnasse.

They raised their eyes. Thénardier thrust out his head a little.

"Quick!" said Montparnasse, "have you the other end of the rope, Brujon?"

"Yes."

"Tie the two ends together, we will throw him the rope, he will fix it to the wall, he will have enough to come down."

Thénardier ventured to raise his voice.

"I am benumbed."

"We'll warm you."

"I can't stir."

"Let yourself slip down, we'll catch you."

"My hands are stiff."

"Only tie the rope to the wall."

"I can't."

"One of us must get up," said Montparnasse.

"Three stories!" said Brujon.

An old plaster conduit, which had served as

a pipe for a stove which was formerly lighted in the shanty, ran along the wall and rose almost to the spot where they saw Thénardier. This pipe which at that day was full of cracks and holes, has since fallen down, but its traces may still be seen. It was very small.

"It would be possible to mount by that," said Montparnasse.

"By that pipe?" exclaimed Babet, "*un orgue* (a man) never! it would take *un mion* (in the argot of the Temple, a child)."

"It would take a *môme* (an infant)," added Brujon in the argot of the Barrières.

"Where can we find a brat?" said Gueulemer.

"Wait," said Montparnasse. "I have the thing."

He gently opened the door of the hoarding, assured himself that nobody was passing in the street, went out carefully, shut the door behind him, and ran off in the direction of the Bastille.

Seven or eight minutes elapsed, eight thousand centuries for Thénardier; Babet, Brujon, and Gueulemer did not open their lips; the door opened again, and Montparnasse appeared, out of breath, and leading Gavroche. The rain continued to make the street completely deserted.

Little Gavroche entered the enclosure and

looked at the faces of the bandits with a quiet air. The rain was dripping from his hair. Gueulemer addressed him.

"Brat, are you a man?"

Gavroche shrugged his shoulders and replied:

"*Un môme comme mézig est un orgue* (A child like me is a man), *et des orgues comme vousailles sont des mômes* (and men like you are children)."

"How *le mion* (the boy), plays with the *crachoir* (spittoon)!" cried Babet. Meaning, "What a well-hung tongue the brat has!"

"*Le môme pantinois* (The Paris child isn't), *maquillé de fertille lansquinée* (made of wet paste)," added Brujon.

"What is it you want?" said Gavroche.

Montparnasse answered:

"Climb up by this flue."

"*Avec cette veuve* (With this rope)," said Babet.

"*Et ligoter la tortouse* (And tie the rope)," continued Brujon.

"*Au monté du montant* (To the top of the wall)," resumed Babet.

"*Au pieu de la vanterne* (To the cross-bar of the window)," added Brujon.

"And then?" said Gavroche.

"That's all!" said Gueulemer.

The gamin examined the rope, the chimney-flue, the wall, the windows, and gave that indescribable and disdainful smack of the lips which signifies:

"What's that!"

"There is a man up there whom you will save," continued Montparnasse.

"Will you?" resumed Brujon.

"Canary-bird!" replied the lad, as if the question appeared to him absurd; and he took off his shoes.

Gueulemer seized Gavroche by one arm, placed him on the roof of the shanty, where mouldering planks bent under the weight of the boy, and handed him the rope which Brujon had joined again during the absence of Montparnasse. The gamin turned to the flue, which it was easy to enter, thanks to a large crevice which touched the roof. At the moment when he was going to ascend, Thénardier, who saw safety and life approaching, leaned over the edge of the wall; the first gleam of day whitened his forehead, reeking with sweat, his livid cheek-bones, his sharp and savage nose, his bristling gray beard, and Gavroche recognized him.

"Hold on!" said he, "it's my father! . . . oh! that won't stop me."

And taking the rope between his teeth he resolutely commenced his ascent.

He reached the top of the ruin, straddled the old wall like a horse, and securely fastened the rope to the topmost cross-bar of the window.

A moment after, Thénardier was in the street.

As soon as he had touched the pavement, so soon as he felt himself out of danger, he was no longer fatigued, nor benumbed, nor trembling; the terrible things through which he had passed vanished like a puff of smoke, all that strange and ferocious intellect was re-aroused, and found itself erect and free, ready to march forward. The first words of this man were:

"Now, whom are we going to eat?"

It is unnecessary to explain the meaning of this frightfully transparent sentence, which signifies at once to kill, to assassinate, and to rob. *To eat:* real meaning, *to devour.*

"Let us hide securely," said Brujon. "Finish in three words, and we will separate immediately. There was an affair which had a good look in the Rue Plumet, a deserted street, an isolated house, an old rusty railing looking on a garden, some lone women."

"Well! why not?" asked Thénardier.

"*Ta fée* (Your daughter), Eponine, went to look at the thing," answered Babet.

"And she brought a biscuit to Magnon,"

added Gueulemer. "There's nothing, *maquiller là* (to be done there)."

"The girl *n'est pas loffe* (is no fool)," said Thénardier. "Still we must see."

"Yes, yes," said Brujon, "we must see."

Meantime none of these men seemed to see Gavroche any longer, who, during this colloquy, was sitting on one of the posts of the palisade; he waited some minutes, perhaps for his father to turn to him, then he put on his shoes again, and said:

"It is over? you have no more use for me, men? you are out of your trouble. I'm off. I must go and get my *mômes* up."

And he went off.

The five men went out of the enclosure one after another.

When Gavroche had disappeared at the corner of the Rue des Ballets, Babet took Thénardier aside.

"Did you notice that *mion* (brat)?" he asked him.

"What *mion*?"

"The *mion* who climbed up the wall and brought you the rope."

"Not much."

"Well, I don't know, but it seems to me it's your son."

"Bah!" said Thénardier; "do you think so?"

BOOK SEVEN

ARGOT

ORIGIN

Pigritia is a terrible word.

It engenders a world, *la pègre*, read *robbery*, and a Hell, *la pégrenne*, read *hunger*.

Hence indolence is a mother.

She has a son, robbery, and a daughter, hunger.

Where are we at this moment? In argot.

What is argot? It is at once the nation and the idiom; it is robbery under its two aspects, people and language.

When thirty-four years ago, the narrator of this grave and sombre history introduced into the middle of a work, written with the same object as this one, entitled *Le dernier Jour d'un Condamné*, a robber speaking argot, there was amazement and clamor. "What! how! argot? But argot is frightful! why, it is the language of convicts, of the galleys, of prisons, of all that is the most abominable in society!" etc., etc., etc.

We could never understand this sort of objection.

Since then two powerful romancists, of whom one is a profound observer of the human heart, the other an intrepid friend of the people, Balzac and Eugène Sue, having made bandits talk in their natural tongue, as did, in 1828, the author of the *Dernier Jour d'un Condamné*, the same objections were raised. It was repeated: "What do these writers want with this revolting patois? argot is odious! argot makes us shudder!"

Who denies it? Undoubtedly.

When the object is to probe a wound, a gulf, or a society, since when did it become a fault to descend too far, to go to the bottom? We have always thought that it was sometimes an act of courage and at the very least a simple and useful action, worthy of the sympathetic attention which accepted and accomplished duty deserves. Not explore the whole, not study the whole, stop on the way, why? To stop is the function of the probe, and not of the prober.

Certainly, to go and search in the lowest depths of social order, where the earth leaves off and where the mire begins, to grope in these vague depths, to pursue, to seize, and to throw still quivering on the pavement that abject idiom which drips with filth as it is thus brought to light, that pustulous vocabulary of which each word seems an unclean ring of a monster of the slime and of the darkness, is neither an

attractive task, nor an easy task. Nothing is more lugubrious than thus to contemplate in its nudity, by the light of thought, the frightful vermin-swarm of argot. It seems, in fact, as if it were a sort of horrible beast made for the night which has just been dragged from its cesspool. It seems to be a frightful polype, living and bristling, which shivers, moves, is agitated, demands the shadow again, menaces, and stares. This word resembles a claw, that other a lustreless and bleeding eye; that phrase seems to snap like the claw of a crab. All this lives with the hideous vitality of things which are organized in disorganization.

Now, since when has horror excluded study? since when has the malady driven away the physician? Can we imagine a naturalist who would refuse to examine a viper, a bat, a scorpion, the scolopendra, the tarantula, and who would throw them into the darkness, saying: "Oh! how ugly they are!" The thinker who turned away from argot would resemble a surgeon who turned away from an ulcer or a wart. He would be a philologist hesitating to examine a fact of language, a philosopher hesitating to scrutinize a fact of humanity. For, it must be told to those who are ignorant, that argot is at once a literary phenomenon and a social result. What is argot, properly speaking? Argot is the language of misery.

Here we may be stopped, the fact may be generalized, which is sometimes a way of palliating it, it may be said that all trades, that all professions, we might almost add all the accidents of the social hierarchy, and all the forms of intelligence, have their argot. The merchant who says: *Montpellier in demand; fine quality Marseilles*, the broker who says: *carrying forward, premium, buying for the account*, the gambler who says: *tiers et tout, refait de pique*, the Bailiff of the Norman Isles who says: *the enfeoffor restricted to his lands cannot claim the fruits of those lands during the heritable seizin of the goods by the renouncer*, the playwright who says: *the piece was goosed*, the vaudeville-writer who says: *we met a bear*, meaning, *the piece was hissed*, the comedian who says: *I've made a hit*, the philosopher who says: *phenomenal triplicity*, the sportsman who says: *a covey of partridges, a leash of woodcocks*, the phrenologist who says: *amativeness, combativeness, secretiveness*, the foot-soldier who says: *my clarionette*, the dragoon who says: *my hen-turkey*, the fencing-master who says: *tierce, carte, disengage*, the printer who says: *hold a chapel*, all—printer, fencing-master, dragoon, foot-soldier, phrenologist, sportsman, philosopher, comedian, vaudeville-writer, bailiff, gambler, stock-broker, merchant, talk argot. The painter who says: *my*

grinder, the notary who says: *my errand-boy*, the barber who says: *my clerk*, the cobbler who says: *my scrub*, speak argot. In strictness, and if we will be absolute, all the different ways of saying right and left, the sailor's *larboard* and *starboard*, the scene-shifter's *off-side* and *prompt-side*, the beadle's *Epistle-side* and *Gospel-side* are argot. There is the argot of affected ladies as there was the argot of the Précieuses. The Hotel de Rambouillet bordered to some extent on the Cour des Miracles. There is the argot of duchesses, witness this phrase written in a note by a very great lady and very pretty woman of the Restoration; *Vous trouverez dans ces potains-là une foultitude de raisons pour que je me libertise.* (You will find in this tittle-tattle a multitude of reasons why I should take my liberty.) Diplomatic ciphers are argot; the pontifical chancery, in writing *26* for *Rome*, *grkztntgzyal* for *Envoy*, and *abfxustgrnogrkzu tu XI.* for *the Duke of Modena*, speaks argot. The physicians of the Middle Ages who, in order to say carrot, radish, and turnip, said: *opoponach*, *perfroschinum*, *repitalmus*, *dracatholicum angelorum*, *postmegorum*, spoke argot. The sugar manufacturer who says: *rectified*, *loaf*, *clarified*, *crushed*, *lump*, *molasses*, *mixed*, *common*, *burned*, *caked*, this honest manufacturer talks argot. A certain school of critics,

who twenty years ago said: *One half of Shakespeare is puns and plays upon words*, spoke argot. The poet and the artist who with a deep significance would call M. de Montmorency "bourgeois," if he were not a connoisseur in verses and statues, talk argot. The classic academician who calls flowers *Flora*, the fruits *Pomona*, the sea *Neptune*, love *the fires*, beauty *the attractions*, a horse *a steed*, the white or tricolored cockade, *the rose of Bellona*, the three-cornered hat *the triangle of Mars* — that classic academician talks argot. Algebra, medicine, botany have their argot. The language employed on shipboard, that admirable sea-language so complete and so picturesque, which Jean Bart, Duquesne, Suffren, and Duperrè spoke, which mingles with the whistling of the rigging, the sound of the speaking-trumpet, the clash of the boarding axe, the rolling, the wind, the gusts, the cannon, is all an heroic and brilliant argot, which is to the ferocious argot of robbers what the lion is to the jackal.

Without doubt. But whatever can be said about it, this mode of comprehending the word argot, is an extension which everybody will not be prepared to admit. As for us, we continue to this word, its old acceptation, precise, circumscribed and settled, and we limit argot to argot. The true argot, the

argot *par excellence*, if these two words can be coupled, the immemorial argot which was a kingdom, is nothing else, we repeat, than the ugly, anxious, sly, treacherous, venomous, cruel, ambiguous, vile, profound, fatal, language of misery. There is at the extremity of all abasements and of all misfortunes a last misery, which revolts and resolves to enter into a struggle with the ensemble of fortunate facts and reigning rights; a frightful struggle, in which, at one moment crafty, at another violent, at once unhealthy and ferocious, it attacks the social order with pin-pricks by vice, and with club-strokes by crime. For the necessities of this struggle, misery has invented a language of combat, which is argot.

To buoy up and to hold up aloft from oblivion, above the abyss, were it only a fragment of any language, that man has spoken, and which would be lost, that is to say, one of the elements, good or bad, of which civilization is composed or with which it is complicated, is to extend the data of social observation, it is to serve civilization itself. This service Plautus rendered voluntarily or involuntarily by making two Carthaginian soldiers speak Phœnician; this service Molière rendered by making so many of his characters talk Levantine and all sorts of patois. Here objec-

tions are revived. The Phœnician, excellent! the Levantine, very good! even patois may be allowed! they are languages which have belonged to nations or to provinces; but argot? what is the good of preserving argot? what good is it to "buoy up" argot?

To this we will answer only one word. Certes, if the language which a nation or a province has spoken is worthy of interest, there is a thing still more worthy of attention and of study, that is the language which a misery has spoken.

It is the language which has been spoken in France, for example, for more than four centuries, not only by one misery, but by that misery, every possible human misery.

And, then, we insist upon the fact, to study social deformities and infirmities, and point them out for cure, is not a task in which choice is permissible. The historian of morals and of ideas has a mission no less austere than the historian of events. The latter has the surface of civilization, the struggles of crowned heads, the births of princes, the marriages of kings, the battles, the assemblies, the great public men, revolutions under the sun, all the external part; the other historian has the interior, the basis, the people that labors, that suffers, and that waits, the overburdened woman, the child that agon-

izes, the dull warfare of man with man, the obscure ferocities, the prejudices, the permitted iniquities, the subterranean counterstrokes of the law, the secret evolutions of souls, the vague shudderings of the multitudes, the starving, the barefooted, the bare-armed, the disinherited, the orphans, the unhappy, and the infamous, all the goblins that wander in obscurity. He must descend with a heart full at the same time of charity and of severity, as a brother and as a judge, into the impenetrable casemates in which crawl pell-mell those who bleed and those who wound, those who weep and those who curse, those who fast and those who devour, those who endure evil and those who commit it. Are the duties of these historians of hearts and of souls inferior to those of the historians of external facts? Can we believe that Alighieri has fewer things to say than Machiavelli? Is the lower part of civilization, because it is deeper and more sombre, less important than the upper? Do we know the mountain thoroughly when we do not know the cavern?

We must say, nevertheless, by the way, that from some words that precede, a marked separation, which does not exist in our mind, might be inferred between the two classes of historians. No one is a good historian of the open, visible, signal, and public life of the

people, if he is not at the same time, to a certain extent, the historian of their profound and hidden life; and no one is a good historian of the interior unless he can be, whenever there is need, historian of the exterior. The history of morals and of ideas penetrates the history of events, and *vice versâ*. They are two orders of different facts which answer to each other, which are always linked with and often engender one another. All the lineaments that Providence traces on the surface of a nation have their parallels, gloomy but distinct, in the bottom and all the convulsions of the bottom produce up-heavings at the surface. True history is a medley of everything, the true historian deals with all.

Man is not a circle with a single centre; he is an ellipse with two foci. Facts are one, ideas are the other.

Argot is nothing but a wardrobe in which language, having some bad action to commit, disguises itself. It puts on word-masks and metaphoric rags.

In this way it becomes horrible.

We can hardly recognize it. Is it really the French language, the great human tongue? There it is ready to enter upon the scene and to give the cue to crime, and suited for all the parts in the repertory of evil. It no longer walks, it hobbles; it limps upon the crutch of

the Cour des Miracles, which can be metamorphosed into a club ; it names itself vagrancy ; all the spectres, its dressers, have begrimed it ; it crawls along and rises erect, the double characteristic of the reptile. It is henceforth ready for any role, made squint-eyed by the forger, verdigrised by the poisoner, blackened by the soot of the incendiary ; and the murderer puts on his red.

When one listens on the side of honest men, at the door of society, we overhear the dialogue of those who are outside. We distinguish questions and answers. We notice, without comprehending it, a hideous murmur, sounding almost like the human accent, but nearer a howling than a speech. This is argot. The words are deformed, and imprinted with we know not what fantastic bestiality. We fancy that we hear hydras talking.

It is unintelligibility in darkness. It gnashes and it whispers, supplementing the twilight by enigma. It grows black in misfortune, it grows blacker still in crime ; these two blacknesses amalgamated compose argot. Obscurity in the atmosphere, obscurity in the deeds, obscurity in the voices. Appalling toad language, which goes, comes, hops, crawls, drivels, and moves monstrously in that immense gray mist made up of rain, of night, of hunger, of vice, of falsehood,

of injustice, of nudity, of asphyxia, and of winter, the high noonday of the miserable.

Let us have compassion on the chastised. Alas! Who are we ourselves? who am I, who speak to you? who are you, who listen to me? whence do we come? and is it quite sure that we did nothing before we were born? The earth is not without resemblance to a gaol. Who knows whether man is not a prisoner of Divine justice?

Look closely into life. It is so constituted that we feel punishment everywhere.

Are you what is called a happy man? Well, you are sad every day. Every day has its great grief or its little care. Yesterday, you trembled for a health which is dear to you, to-day you are frightened about your own, to-morrow it will be an anxiety about money, the day after the diatribe of a calumniator, the day after that again the misfortune of a friend; then the weather, then something broken or lost, or a pleasure for which your conscience and your vertebral column reproach you; another time, the progress of public affairs. Without counting the pangs of the heart. And so on. One cloud is dissipated, another forms. Hardly one day in a hundred of complete joy and of complete sunshine. And you are one of that small number who are happy! As for other men, stagnant night is upon them.

Reflecting minds make little use of this expression: the happy and the unhappy. In this world, which is evidently the vestibule of another, there is none happy.

The true human division is this: the luminous and the dark.

To diminish the number of the dark, to augment the number of the luminous, behold, the aim. This is why we cry: "Instruction! knowledge!" To learn to read is to light the fire; every syllable spelled is a spark.

Nevertheless, he who says, light, does not necessarily say, joy. There is suffering in light; its excess, burns. Flame is hostile to the wing. To burn without ceasing to fly, is the prodigy of genius.

When you know, and when you love, you will suffer still. The day is born in tears. The luminous weep, be it only for the sake of those in darkness.

Argot is the language of the dark.

II.

ROOTS

Thought is aroused in its gloomiest depths, social philosophy is excited to its most poignant meditations, in the presence of this enigmatical dialect, which is at once withered and in a state of revolt. There is in this a visible chastisement. Each syllable has a branded look. The words of the common language appear in it, as if wrinkled and shriveled under the red-hot iron of the executioner. Some seem still to smoke. Some phrases produce in you the effect of a fleur-de-lysed shoulder of a robber suddenly laid bare. Ideas almost refuse to be expressed by these substantives condemned of justice. Its metaphor is at times so shameless that you feel that they have worn the iron collar.

Still, in spite of all this, and because of all this, this strange patois has, of right, its compartment in that great impartial museum, in which there is place for the oxydized farthing as well as the gold medal, and which is called literature. Argot, whether people allow it or

not, has its syntax and its poetry. It is a language. If, by the deformity of certain vowels, we perceive that it has been chewed by Mandrin, we feel, from the splendor of certain metonymies, that Villon spoke it.

That verse, so exquisite and so celebrated:

"*Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?*"

("But where are the snows of antan?")

is a verse of argot. Antan—*ante annum*—is a word of the argot of Thunes, which signifies *the past year*, and, by extension, *formerly*. There might still be read thirty-five years ago, at the time of the departure of the great chain-gang of 1827, in one of the dungeons of Bicêtre this maxim, engraved with a nail on the wall by a king of Thunes condemned to the galleys: *Les dabs d'antan trimaient siempre pour la pierre du Coësre.* That is to say: *The kings of former days always went to be consecrated.* In the thought of that king, consecration was the galleys.

The word *décarade*, which expresses the departure of a heavy coach at a gallop, is attributed to Villon, and is worthy of him. This word, which strikes fire with four feet, contains in a masterly onomatopœia the whole of the admirable line of La Fontaine:

"*Six forts chevaux tiraient un coche.*"

("Six sturdy horses drew a coach.")

From a purely literary point of view, few studies would be more curious or more prolific than that of argot. It is a complete language within a language, a sort of diseased excrescence, a sickly graft which has produced a vegetation, a parasite which has its roots in the old Gaulish trunk, and of which the sinister foliage crawls up the whole of one side of the language. This is what might be called the primary aspect, the common aspect of argot. But to those who study the language as it ought to be studied, that is to say, as geologists study the earth, argot appears like a true alluvium. According as we dig more or less deeply, we find in argot, beneath the old popular French, Provençal, Spanish, Italian, Levantine, this language of the Mediterranean ports, English and German, Romance, in its three varieties of French romance, Italian romance, Roman romance, then Latin, finally, Basque and Celtic. A deep and grotesque formation. A subterranean edifice built up in common by all the miserable. Each accursed race has deposited its stratum, each suffering has let its stone fall, each heart has given its pebble. A multitude of wicked souls, low, or irritated, who have passed through life, and have faded away into eternity, are found there almost entire, and to some extent still visible, in the shape of a monstrous word.

Do you want Spanish? the old Gothic argot swarms with it. Here is *boffette* (a box of the ears), which comes from *bofeton; vantane* (a window), afterwards *vanterne*, which comes from *vantana; gat* (a cat), which comes from *gato; acite* (oil), which comes from *aceyte*. Do you want Italian? Here is *spade* (a sword), which comes from *spada; carvel* (a boat), which comes from *caravella*. Do you want English? Here is *bichot*, which comes from *bishop; raille* (a spy), which comes from *rascal, rascallion* (a rogue); *pilche* (a case), which comes from *pilcher* (a scabbard). Do you want German? Here are *caleur* (the waiter), *kellner; hers* (the master), *herzog* (duke). Do you want Latin? Here is *frangir* (to break), *frangere; affurer* (to steal), *fur; cadène* (a chain), *catena*. There is one word which is found in all continental languages with a sort of mysterious power and authority, that is the word *magnus;* Scotland makes of it, its *mac*, which denotes the chief of a clan, Mac-Farlane, Mac-Callummore, the great Farlane, the great Callum-more; it should be observed that *mac* in Celtic means son; argot makes it *meck*, and later *meg*, that is to say, God. Do you want Basque? Here is *gahisto* (the devil), which comes from *gaïztoa* (bad); *sorgabon* (good-night), which comes from *gabon* (good-evening). Do you want Celtic? Here is

blavin (a handkerchief), which comes from *blavet* (running water); *ménesse* (a woman, in a bad sense), which comes from *meinec* (full of stones); *barant* (a stream), from *baranton* (a fountain); *goffeur* (a locksmith), from *goff* (a blacksmith); *guédouze* (death), which comes from *guenn-du* (white-and-black). Finally, do you want history? Argot calls crowns *maltèses*, in memory of the coins which circulated on the galleys of Malta.

Besides the philological origins which we have just indicated, argot has other roots, still more natural, and which issue, so to speak, directly from the mind of man himself.

Firstly, the direct creation of words. In this is the mystery of languages. To paint by words which have, we know not how nor why, forms. This is the primitive foundation of every human language, what might be called the granite. Argot swarms with words of this kind, immediate words, created all of one piece, we know not where, nor by whom, without etymologies, without analogies, without derivatives, solitary words, barbarous words, sometimes hideous, which have a singular power of expression, and are alive.—The executioner, *le taule*;—the forest, *le sabri*;—fear, flight, *taf*;—the footman, *le larbin*;—the general, the prefect, the minister, *pharos*;—the devil, *le rabouin*. Nothing is more strange

than these words, which mask and yet reveal. Some of them, *le rabouin*, for instance, are at the same time grotesque and terrible, and produce the effect of a Cyclopean grimace.

Secondly, metaphor. It is the peculiarity of a language that wishes to say everything and to conceal everything, that it abounds in figures. Metaphor is an enigma which offers itself as a refuge to the robber who is scheming a plot, to the prisoner who is planning an escape. No idiom is more metaphorical than argot.—*Dévisser le coco* (to unscrew the cocoanut, that is, to twist the neck),—*tortiller* (to wind up, that is, to eat);—*être gerbé* (to be sheaved, that is, to be tried);—*un rat* (a rat, that is, a stealer of bread);—*il lansquine* (it rains), an old striking figure, which carries to some extent its date with it, which assimilates the long oblique lines of rain to the thick and driving pikes of lansquenets, and contains in one word the popular metonym: *it rains halberts*, or *cats and dogs*. At times, in proportion as argot passes from the first to the second period, words pass from the savage and primitive state to a metaphorical sense. The devil ceases to be *le rabouin*, and becomes *the baker*, he who puts into the oven. This is wittier but not so grand; something like Racine after Corneille, like Euripides after Æschylus. Certain phrases of argot which

belong to two periods, and have at the same time a barbarous and a metaphorical character, resemble phantasmagorias. — *Les sorgueurs vont sollicer des gails à la lune* (the prowlers are going to steal some horses by night).— This passes before the mind like a group of spectres. We know not what we see.

Thirdly, expedient. Argot lives upon the language. It uses it at its caprice, it takes from it by chance, and contents itself often, when the necessity arises, with denaturalizing it summarily and grossly. At times, with ordinary words thus deformed and complicated with words of pure argot, it forms picturesque expressions, in which we feel the mixture of the two previous elements, the direct creation and the metaphor: *Le cab jaspine, je marronne que la roulotte de Pantin trime dans le sabri* (The dog barks, I suspect that the Paris diligence is passing through the wood). *Le dab est sinve, la dabuge est merloussière, la fée est bative* (the bourgeois is stupid, the bourgeoise is cunning, the daughter is pretty).— Most frequently, in order to mislead listeners, argot confines itself to adding indistinctly to all the words of the language, a sort of ignoble tail, a termination in aille, in orgue, in iergue or in uche. Thus: *Vouziergue trouvaille bonorgue ce gigotmuche?* (Do you find this leg of mutton good?) A phrase addressed by

Cartouche to a turnkey, in order to learn whether the sum offered him for an escape satisfied him.—The termination in *mar* has been very recently added.

Argot, being the idiom of corruption, quickly corrupts itself. Moreover, as it always seeks disguise, so soon as it feels that it is understood, it transforms itself. Unlike all other vegetation, every ray of light upon it kills what it touches. Hence argot is being decomposed and recomposed without cessation; an obscure and rapid process which never ceases. It makes more way in ten years than language does in ten centuries. Thus *larton* (bread) become *lartif; gail* (a horse) becomes *gaye; fertanche* (straw), *fertille; momignard* (the child), *momacque; siques* (clothes), *frusques; chique* (the church), *égrugeoir; colabre* (the neck), *colas*. The devil is first gahisto, then le rabouin, then the baker; a priest is the ratichon, then the boar; a dagger is the vingt-deux, then the surin, then the lingre; the police are railles, then roussins, then rousses, then marchands de lacets, then coqueurs, then cognes; the executioner is the taule, then Charlot, then the atigeur, then the becquillard. In the seventeenth century to fight was to *take snuff;* in the nineteenth it is *to chew a quid in the mouth*. Twenty different expressions have passed away between these

two extremes. Cartouche would speak Hebrew to Lacenaire. All the words of this language are perpetually in flight, like the men who speak them.

Still, from time to time, and owing to this very movement, the old argot reappears and becomes new again. It has its headquarters where it maintains itself. The Temple preserved the argot of the seventeenth century; Bicêtre, when it was a prison, preserved the argot of the Thunes. There was heard the termination in *anche* of the old Thuners. *Boyanches tu?* (bois-tu?) (do you drink?) *il croyanche* (il croit), (he believes). But perpetual movement, none the less, is the law.

If the philosopher succeeds in fixing for a moment, for the purpose of observation, this language, which evaporates without cessation, he falls into sorrowful yet useful meditations. No study is more efficacious and more fertile in instruction. There is not a metaphor, there is not an etymology of argot which does not contain a lesson. Among these men *to beat* means *to feign;* they *beat* a sickness; cunning is their strength.

With them the idea of man is not separated from the idea of a shadow. Night is called *la sorgue;* man, *l'orgue.* Man is a derivative of night.

They have acquired the habit of considering

society as an atmosphere which kills, as a fatal force, and they talk of their liberty as one would of his health. A man arrested is *sick;* a man condemned is *dead.*

What is the most terrible for the prisoner within the four stone walls which enshroud him is a sort of freezing chastity; he calls the dungeon the *castus.*—In this funereal place, external life will always appear under its most smiling aspect. The prisoner has irons on his feet; you may perhaps fancy that he dreams that people walk with their feet? no, he dreams that they dance with their feet; hence, if he succeeds in cutting through his irons, his first idea is that now he can dance, and he calls the saw a *bastringue* (a public-house ball).—A *name* is a *centre;* a profound assimilation.—The bandit has two heads, the one which regulates his deeds and guides him all his life, the other which he has on his shoulders on the day of his death; he calls the head which counsels him in crime, the *sorbonne*, and the head that expiates it, the *tronche.*—When a man has nothing but rags on his body and vices in his heart, when he has reached that double degradation, material and moral, which characterizes in its two significations the word *gueux* (beggar), he is ripe for crime, he is like a well-sharpened knife, he has two edges, his distress and his villainy; hence argot does not

say a "gueux;" it says a *réguisé*.—What are the galleys? a furnace of damnation, a hell. The convict calls himself a *faggot*.—Lastly, what name do malefactors give to the prison? the *college*. A whole penitentiary system might spring from this word.

Would you know whence come most of the songs of the galleys, those refrains called in the special vocabularies the *lirlonfa*? Listen to this.

There was at the Châtelet de Paris a large, long cellar. This cellar was eight feet deep below the level of the Seine. It had neither windows nor gratings, the only opening was the door; men could enter it, not air. This cellar had for ceiling an arch of stone, and for floor ten inches of mud. It had been paved with tiles; but, owing to the oozing of the waters, the pavement had rotted and broken up. Eight feet above the ground, a long massive beam crossed this vault from side to side; from this joist hung, at regular distances, chains three feet long, and at the end of these chains were iron collars. In this cellar men condemned to the galleys were kept until the day of their departure for Toulon. They were thrust under this beam, where each had his iron, oscillating in the darkness, waiting for him. The chains, those pendant arms, and the iron collars, these open hands,

seized these miserable ones by the neck. They were riveted and they were left there. The chain being too short, they could not lie down. They remained motionless in this cellar, in this night, under this beam, almost hung, forced to unheard-of efforts to reach their loaf or their water-jug, the vault above their heads, the mud up to their knees, their excrements running down their legs, drawn and quartered by fatigue, giving way at the hips and knees, hanging on by their hands to the chain to rest themselves, only able to sleep standing, and awakened every moment by the strangling of the iron collar; some did not awake. To eat they were obliged to draw up their bread, which was thrown into the mud, with the heel all along the thigh up to their hand. How long did they remain thus? One month, two months, six months sometimes; one remained a year. It was the antechamber of the galleys. Men were put there for stealing a hare from the king. In this hellish sepulchre what did they do? What can be done in a sepulchre, they agonized, and that which can be done in hell, they sang. For when there is no more hope, song remains. In the waters of Malta, when a galley was approaching, the singing was heard before the sound of the oars. The poor poacher Survincent, who had passed through the cellar-prison of the Châtelet,

said: *It was the rhymes that sustained me.* The inutility of poetry. What is the good of rhyme? In this cellar nearly all the songs of argot were born. It is from the dungeon of the Grand-Châtelet of Paris that comes the melancholy galley refrain of Montgomery: *Timaloumisaine, timoulamison.* Most of the songs are lugubrious; some are gay; and one is tender:

> *" Icicaille est le théâtre*
> *Du petit dardant."*
> (" Here we have the theatre
> Of the little Archer (Cupid).")

Do what you will, you cannot annihilate that eternal relic of the heart of man, love.

In this world of dark deeds secrecy is preserved. Secrecy is a thing belonging to all. Secrecy to these miserable ones is the unity which serves as a basis of union. To break secrecy is to tear from each member of this ferocious community something of himself. To denounce, in the energetic language of argot, is called: *to eat the morsel.* As if the denouncer took a little of the substance of each and supported himself on a morsel of the flesh of each.

What is to receive a box on the ears? The trite metaphor answers: " *It is to see thirty-six candles*, that is, *to see stars.* Here argot intervenes and reads: *Chandelle, camoufle.*

Upon this, ordinary language gives as a synonym for a box on the ears, *camouflet*. Hence, by a sort of penetration from bottom to top, and by the aid of metaphor, that incalculable trajectory, argot, ascends from the cavern to the academy, and Poulailler saying: *I light my camoufle*, makes Voltaire write: *Langleviel La Beaumelle deserves a hundred camouflets.*

A search into argot is a discovery at every step. The study and investigation of this strange idiom lead to the mysterious point of intersection between regular society with outcast society.

Argot is speech become a convict.

That the thinking principle of man can be hurled down so deep that it can be dragged there and bound by the obscure tyrannies of fatality, that it can be fastened to some unknown rivets on this precipice is appalling.

O pitiful thought of the miserable!

Alas! will no one come to the help of the human soul in this gloom? Is it its destiny ever to await the mind, the liberator, the immense rider of Pegasus and the hippogryphs, the aurora-hued combatant, who descends from the azure sky between two wings, the radiant Knight of the future? Will it always call in vain to its help the lance of the light of idealism? Is it condemned to hear the Evil coming terribly through the

depths of the abyss, and to see, closer and closer to it, beneath the hideous water, that draconian head, those jaws reeking with the lather of perspiration, and this serpentine undulation of claws, of swellings, and of rings? Must it remain there without one gleam, without hope, abandoned to that horrible approach, vaguely scented by the monster, shuddering, with disheveled hair, wringing its hands, and eternally chained to the rock of night, a sombre Andromeda, white and naked in the darkness?

III.

ARGOT WHICH WEEPS AND ARGOT WHICH LAUGHS

As we see, the whole of argot, the argot of four hundred years ago, as well as the argot of to-day, is pervaded by that sombre spirit of symbolism which gives to its every word sometimes an appearance of suffering, sometimes a menacing air. We see in it the old ferocious sadness of those vagabonds of the Cour des Miracles, who played at cards with packs of their own, some of which have been preserved for us. The eight of clubs, for instance, represented a big tree bearing eight enormous clover leaves, a sort of fantastic personification of the forest. At the foot of this tree could be seen a lighted fire, at which three hares were roasting a hunter on a spit, and behind, over another fire, a smoking pot from which emerged the head of a dog. Nothing can be more lugubrious than these reprisals in painting upon a pack of cards, in the face of the pyres for roasting contrabandists and the cauldron for boiling coiners. The

various forms which thought assumed in the kingdom of argot, even song, even raillery, even menace, all had this impotent and crushed character. All the songs, of which some melodies have been preserved, were humble and lamentable unto weeping. The pègre calls itself the *poor pègre*, and it is always the hare that hides itself, the mouse that escapes, the bird that flies away. It hardly complains, it restricts itself to sighing; one of its groans has come down to us:—*Je n'entrave que le dail comment meck, le daron des orgues, peut atiger ses mômes et ses momignards, et les locher criblant sans être atigé lui-même* (I do not understand how God, the Father of men, can torture His children and His grandchildren, and hear them cry, without being tortured Himself). The miserable, every time he has time to think, esteems himself little before the law and paltry before society; he lies flat on his belly, he supplicates, and turns toward pity; we feel that he knows himself in the wrong.

Toward the middle of the last century a change took place. The songs of the prisons, the ritornellos of the robbers assumed, so to speak, an insolent and jovial expression. The plaintive *maluré* was replaced by *larifla*. We find, in the eighteenth century, in nearly all the songs of the galleys, of the hulks, and of the prisons, a diabolical and enigmatical gayety.

We hear in them that shrill and leaping refrain which seems illumined by a phosphorescent gleam, and which appears cast into the forest by a will-o'-the-wisp playing the fife:

Mirlababi surlababo
Mirliton ribon ribette,
Surlababi mirlababo
Mirliton ribon ribo.

This was sung while cutting a man's throat in a cave or in a corner of a wood.

A serious symptom. In the eighteenth century the ancient melancholy of these despondings classes is dissipated. They began to laugh. They ridicule the great Meg and the great Dab. Speaking of Louis XV. they call the king of France the "Marquis de Pantin." They are almost gay. A sort of flickering light issues from these wretched ones, as if their conscience no longer weighed them down. These lamentable tribes of darkness have no longer the despairing audacity of deeds only, they have the reckless audacity of mind. A sign that they are losing the feeling of their criminality, and that they feel even among the thinkers and the dreamers some support, of which they are themselves ignorant. A sign that robbery and pillage are beginning to infiltrate even into doctrines and sophisms, in such a manner as to lose a little of their ugliness, by giving a good deal of it to the soph-

isms and the doctrines. A sign lastly, if no diversion arises, of some prodigious and speedy explosion.

Let us pause for a moment. Whom are we accusing here? is it the eighteenth century? is it its philosophy? Certainly not. The work of the eighteenth century is healthy and good. The encyclopædists, Diderot at their head, the physiocratists, Turgot at their head, the philosophers, Voltaire at their head, the utopists, Rousseau at their head, are four sacred legions. The immense advance of humanity toward the light is due to them. They are the four vanguards of the human race, going toward the four cardinal points of progress, Diderot toward the beautiful, Turgot toward the useful, Voltaire toward the truth, Rousseau toward the just. But, by the side of and below the philosophers, there were the sophists, a venomous vegetation mingled with a healthy growth, hemlock in a virgin forest. While the hangman was burning on the grand staircase of the Palace of Justice the grand liberating books of the age, writers forgotten to-day, were publishing, with the royal privilege, strangely disorganizing writings, greedily read by scoundrels. Some of these publications, strange to say, patronized by a prince, will be found in the *Bibliothèque secrète*. These facts, deep-rooted but ignored, were

unnoticed on the surface. Sometimes the very obscurity of a fact constitutes its danger. It is obscure because it is subterranean. Of all the writers, the one who perhaps dug the most unhealthy gallery among the masses was Restif de la Bretonne.

This work, adapted to all Europe, committed greater ravages in Germany than anywhere else. In Germany, during a certain period, summed up by Schiller in his famous drama *The Robbers*, robbery and pillage were raised into a protest against property and labor, they appropriated certain elementary ideas, specious and false, just in appearance, absurd in reality, wrapped themselves up in these ideas, to some extent disappeared in them, took an abstract name, and passed into the state of theory, and in this way circulated among the laborious, suffering, and honest masses, without even the cognizance of the imprudent chemists who had prepared the mixture, without even the cognizance of the masses who accepted it. Every time a fact of this kind is produced, it is serious. Suffering engenders passion; and while the prosperous classes blind themselves, or go to sleep, which is always to close the eyes, the hatred of the unfortunate classes kindles its torch at some sullen or ill-constituted mind, which dreams in a corner, and sets itself to examine

society. Examination by hatred, a terrible thing!

Hence, if the misfortune of the time so wills, those frightful commotions, formerly called *Jacqueries*, by the side of which purely political agitations are child's-play, which are no longer the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, but the revolt of discomfort against well-being. Everything then falls.

Jacqueries are the earthquakes of the peoples.

It was this peril, imminent, perhaps, in Europe toward the end of the eighteenth century, that was cut short by the French Revolution, that immense act of probity.

The French Revolution, which was nothing but the ideal armed with a sword, erected itself, and, by the same sudden movement, closed the door of evil and opened the door of good.

It cleared up the question, promulgated the truth, chased away the miasma, ventilated the century, crowned the people.

We may say of it that it created man a second time, by giving him a second soul, his right.

The nineteenth century inherits and profits by its work, and to-day the social catastrophe which we just now indicated is simply impossible. A blind man is he who denounces it!

a simpleton who fears it! the Revolution is the vaccine of Jacquerie.

Thanks to the Revolution, the social conditions are changed. The feudal and monarchical diseases are no longer in our blood. There is nothing more of the Middle Ages in our constitution. We are no longer at the time when formidable internal swarms made irruptions, when men heard beneath their feet the obscure course of a sullen sound, when there appeared on the surface of civilization some mysterious uprisings of molehills, when the soil cracked, when the roof of caverns opened, and when men saw monstrous heads suddenly rise from the earth.

The revolutionary sense is a moral sense. The sentiment of right, developed, develops the sentiment of duty. The law of all is liberty, which ends where the liberty of another man begins, according to the admirable definition of Robespierre. Since '89 the whole people has been dilated in the sublimated individual; there is no poor man who, having his right, has not his radiance; the starving man feels within himself the honesty of France; the dignity of the citizen is an internal armor; he who is free is scrupulous; he who votes, reigns. Hence incorruptibility; hence the abortion of unhealthy lusts; hence eyes heroically lowered before temptations.

The revolutionary healthiness is so great, that on a day of deliverance, a 14th of July, a 10th of August, there is no more a populace. The first cry of the enlightened and enlarging crowds is: "death to the robbers!" Progress is an honest man; the ideal and the absolute do not pick pockets. By whom, in 1848, were the chests containing the wealth of the Tuileries escorted? by the rag-pickers of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Rags mounted guard over the treasure. Virtue rendered these tatterdemalions resplendent. There was, in these chests, in boxes hardly closed, some, indeed, half open, amid a hundred dazzling caskets, that old crown of France, all of diamonds, surmounted by the Regent's carbuncle of royalty, which was worth thirty millions. Barefooted, they guarded this crown.

Consequently, no more Jacquerie. I am sorry for the clever men. It is an old fear which has made its last effort, and can be no more employed in politics. The great spring of the red spectre is broken. All the world knows it now. The scarecrow no longer scares. The birds take liberties with the mannikin, they deposit their guano upon it, the bourgeois laugh at it.

IV.

THE TWO DUTIES: TO WATCH AND TO HOPE

This being so, is all social danger dissipated? certainly not. There is no Jacquerie. Society may be reassured on that side, the blood will rush no more to its head; but it must pay attention to the way in which it breathes. Apoplexy is no more to be feared, but consumption is there. Social consumption is called misery.

We die when undermined as well as when struck by lightning.

Let us not weary of repeating, to think before all of the disinherited and sorrowful multitudes, to relieve them, to give them air, to enlighten them, to love them, to enlarge their horizon magnificently, to lavish upon them education in all its forms, to offer them the example of labor, never the example of indolence, to lessen the weight of individual burden by increasing the notion of universal purpose, to limit poverty without limiting wealth, to create vast fields of public and popular activity, to

have, like Briareus, a hundred hands to stretch out on all sides to the crushed and to the feeble, to employ the collective power in that grand duty of opening workshops for every arm, schools for every aptitude, and laboratories for every intellect, to increase wages, to diminish suffering, to balance the debit and credit, that is to say, to proportion enjoyment to effort, and satisfaction to need, in one word, to evolve from the social apparatus, on behalf of those who suffer and of those who are ignorant, more light and more comfort, is, let not sympathetic souls forget it, the first of brotherly obligations, is, let egotistic hearts know it, the first of political necessities.

And, we must say, all this is only a beginning. The true question is this: labor cannot be law without being a right.

We do not insist upon this, it is not the place for that.

If nature is called providence, society ought to call itself foresight.

Intellectual and moral growth is not less indispensable than natural amelioration. To know is a viaticum, to think is a primary necessity, truth is nourishment, as is wheat. A reason by fasting from knowledge and wisdom grows thin. Let us pity, equally with stomachs, those minds that do not eat. If there be anything more poignant than a body

agonizing from want of bread, it is a soul that dies of hunger for enlightenment.

The whole of our progress tends toward the solution. Some day people will be astounded. As the human race ascends, the deepest strata will naturally emerge from the zone of distress. The effacement of misery will be effected by a simple elevation of level.

This blessed solution we should do wrong to doubt.

The past, it is true, is very powerful at the present hour. It is beginning again. This revivification of a corpse is surprising. Here it is walking and living. It appears a victor; this dead man is a conqueror. He comes with his legion, his superstitions, with his sword, despotism, with his banner, ignorance; within a little time he has won ten battles. He advances, he threatens, he laughs, he is at our doors. As for ourselves, we shall not despair. Let us sell the field on which Hannibal is encamped.

We who believe, what can we fear?

There are no more recoils of ideas than there are recoils of rivers.

But let those who desire not the future reflect upon it. By saying, no, to progress it is not the future they condemn, but themselves. They give themselves a sombre disease; they inoculate themselves with the past. There is

only one way of refusing To-morrow, that is, to die.

Now, no death, that of the body, as late as possible, that of the soul, never, is what we wish.

Yes, the enigma shall say a word, the sphinx shall speak, the problem shall be resolved. Yes, the people rough-hewn by the eighteenth century shall be completed by the nineteenth. He is an idiot who doubts it! The future birth, the speedy birth of universal well-being, is a divinely fatal phenomenon.

Immense pushings together rule human affairs, and lead them all within a given time to the logical condition, that is to say, to equilibrium, that is to say, to equity. A force composed of earth and of heaven results from humanity and governs it; this force is a worker of miracles; marvelous dénouements are no more difficult to it than extraordinary incidents. Aided by science, which comes from man, and by the event, which comes from Another, it is but little frightened by those contradictions in the posture of problems which seem, to the vulgar, impossibilities. It is no less clever in making a solution leap forth from the approximation of ideas than instruction from the approximation of facts, and we may expect everything from the mysterious power of progress, which, some fine day,

confronts the east with the west in the depths of a sepulchre, and makes the Imaums talk with Bonaparte in the interior of the great Pyramid.

In the meanwhile, no halt, no hesitation, no check, in the grand forward march of minds. Social philosophy is essentially science and peace. It has for its object, and must have for its result, the dissolution of passions by the study of antagonisms. It examines, it scrutinizes, and analyzes; then it recomposes. It proceeds by the way of reduction by removing hatred from all.

That a society may be swamped by the wind which breaks loose on men has been more than once seen; history is full of shipwrecks of peoples and of empires; manners, laws, religions, some fine day, that unknown, the hurricane, passes, and carries them all away. The civilizations of India, of Chaldæa, of Persia, of Assyria, of Egypt have disappeared one after the other. Why? we know not. What are the causes of these disasters? we do not know. Could these societies have been saved? was it their own fault? were they obstinate in some fatal vice which destroyed them? what amount of suicide is there in these terrible deaths of a nation and of a race? Questions without answer. Darkness covers the condemned civilizations. They have been under water,

since they were engulfed; we have nothing more to say; and it is with a sort of terror that we see in the background of that sea which is called the past, behind those colossal waves, the centuries, the foundering of those immense ships, Babylon, Nineveh, Tarsus, Thebes, Rome, under the terrific blast which blows from all the mouths of darkness. But there was darkness there, light here. We are ignorant of the diseases of ancient civilizations, we know the infirmities of our own. We have everywhere upon it the rights of light; we contemplate its beauties and we lay bare its deformities. Where it is unsound we probe it; and at once the suffering is located, the study of the cause leads to the discovery of the remedy. Our civilization, the work of twenty centuries, is at once the monster and the prodigy; it is worth saving. It will be saved. To assuage it is much; to enlighten it is also something. All the labors of modern social philosophy ought to converge toward this end. The thinker of today has a great duty, to auscultate civilization.

We repeat it, this auscultation is encouraging; and it is by this insistence upon encouragement, that we wish to finish these few pages, austere interlude of a dolorous drama. Beneath the social mortality we feel the human

imperishability. Because it has here and there those wounds, craters, and those ringworms, marshes, because of a volcano which breaks out and throws out its pus, the globe does not die. The diseases of a people do not kill the man.

And nevertheless, he who follows the social clinics shakes his head at times. The strongest, the most tender, the most logical, have their hours of despondency.

Will the future arrive? it seems that we may almost ask this question when we see so much terrible shadow. There is a sombre confrontation of the egotists and of the wretched. On the part of the egotists, prejudices, the darkness of the education of wealth, appetite growing with intoxication, a stupefaction of prosperity that deafens, a fear of suffering which, in some, reaches to an aversion for sufferers, an implacable satisfaction, self so puffed up that it closes the soul; on the part of the wretched, covetousness, envy, the hatred of seeing others enjoy, the deep yearnings of the human animal toward the gratifications, hearts full of mist, sorrow, want, fatality, ignorance impure and simple.

Must we continue to raise our eyes to heaven? is the luminous point which we notice there one of those which die out? The ideal is terrible to look on thus lost in the

depths, small, isolated, imperceptible, shining, but surrounded by all those great black menaces monstrously massed around it; yet, in no more danger than a star in the jaws of the clouds.

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THE NOVELS

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

OF

VICTOR HUGO

LES MISERABLES

IV

THE IDYL OF THE RUE PLUMET AND THE EPIC OF THE RUE SAINT-DENIS

VOLUME II

VICTOR HUGO

LES MISÉRABLES

IV

THE IDYL OF THE RUE PLUMET AND THE EPIC OF THE RUE SAINT-DENIS

TRANSLATED BY

M. EDOUARD JOLIVET

VOLUME II

PHILADELPHIA

GEORGE BARRIE & SON

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BOOK EIGHT

ENCHANTMENTS AND DESOLATIONS

I.

FULL LIGHT

The reader has understood that Eponine, having recognized through the railings the inhabitants of the house in the Rue Plumet, to which Magnon had sent her, had begun by diverting the bandits from the Rue Plumet, then had led Marius there, and that after several days of ecstasy before the railings, Marius, drawn by that force which attracts iron to the loadstone, and the lover toward the stones of which the house in which she whom he loves resides, had finished by entering the garden of Cosette, as Romeo did the garden of Juliet. It had even been more easy for him than for Romeo; Romeo was obliged to escalade a wall, Marius had only to force a little aside one of the bars of the decrepit railing which was loose in its rusty setting, after the manner of the teeth of old people. Marius was thin and passed easily.

As there never was anybody in the street, and as, moreover, Marius never entered the

garden except at night, he ran no risk of being seen.

From that blessed and holy hour when a kiss affianced these two souls, Marius came there every evening. If, at this moment of her life, Cosette had fallen in love with a man who was little scrupulous and a libertine, she would have been lost; for there are generous natures that surrender themselves and Cosette was one. One of the magnanimities of woman is to yield. Love, at that elevation where it is absolute, is complicated by a certain celestial blindness of modesty. But what dangers do you run, O noble souls! Often you give the heart, we take the body. Your heart is left to you, and you look at it in the darkness with trembling. Love has no middle term; either it loses, or it saves. All human destiny is in this dilemma. This dilemma, loss or salvation, no fatality more inexorably proposes than love. Love is life, if it be not death. A cradle; a coffin also. The same feeling says yes and no in the human heart. Of all the things that God has made, the human heart is the one which evolves the most light, alas! also, the most night.

God willed it that the love which Cosette encountered should be one of those loves which save.

So long as the month of May of that year,

1832, lasted, there were there every night, in this poor wild garden, under that thicket, every day more fragrant and more dense, two beings composed of all the chastities and of all the innocences, overflowing with all the felicities of heaven, nearer to the archangels than to man, pure, honest, intoxicated, radiant, who were resplendent the one to the other in the darkness. It seemed to Cosette that Marius had a crown, and to Marius that Cosette had a nimbus. They touched each other, they looked at each other, they took each other's hands, they pressed close to each other; but there was a distance which they never crossed. Not that they respected it; they were ignorant of it. Marius perceived a barrier, the purity of Cosette, and Cosette felt a support, the loyalty of Marius. The first kiss had been also the last, Marius, since, had not gone beyond touching Cosette's hand or her neckerchief or a lock of her hair with his lips. Cosette was to him a perfume, and not a woman. He breathed her. She refused nothing, and he demanded nothing. Cosette was happy and Marius was satisfied. They lived in that ravishing state which might be called the dazzling of a soul. It was the ineffable first embrace of two virginities in the ideal. Two swans meeting on the Jungfrau.

At this hour of love, the hour when volup-

tuousness is absolutely silent under the omnipotence of ecstasy, Marius, the pure and seraphic Marius, would have sooner been able to go home with a public woman than to raise Cosette's dress to the height of her ankle. Once in the moonlight, Cosette stooped to pick up something from the ground, her dress opened and displayed the contour of her neck. Marius turned away his eyes.

What passed between these two beings? Nothing. They were adoring each other.

At night, when they were there, this garden seemed a living and sacred spot. All the flowers opened around them and wafted them their incense; they, too, opened their souls and poured them forth to the flowers. The wanton and vigorous vegetation trembled, full of sap and intoxication, around these two innocents, and they uttered words of love at which the trees thrilled.

What were these words? Whispers. Nothing more. These whispers were sufficient to trouble and to stir all this nature. A magic power which it would be difficult to understand, were we to read in a book this prattle made to be carried away and dissipated like smoke by the wind under the leaves. Take away from these murmurs of two lovers the melody which issues from the soul, and which accompanies them like a lyre, what is left is

only a shadow; you say: "What! is that all!" Well, yes, childish things, repetitions, laughs at nothing, inutilities, absurdities, all that is the most sublime and the most profound in the world! the only things which are worth the trouble of being said and being listened to!

These absurdities, these poor things, the man who has never heard them, the man who has never spoken them, is an imbecile and a wicked man.

Cosette said to Marius:

"Knowest thou . . . ?"

(In all this, and throughout this celestial virginity, and without it being possible for the one or the other to say how, the saying thee and thou, was observed.)

"Knowest thou? My name is Euphrasie."

"Euphrasie? No, you are named Cosette."

"Oh! Cosette is a very ugly name, that was given me when I was little. But my true name is Euphrasie. Don't you like that name, Euphrasie?"

"Yes . . .But Cosette is not ugly."

"Do you like it better than Euphrasie?"

"Well . . .Yes."

"Then, I like it better, too. It is true, it is pretty, Cosette. Call me Cosette."

And the smile which she added made of this dialogue an idyl worthy of a celestial grove.

Another time she looked at him intently, and exclaimed:

"Monsieur, you are handsome, you are good-looking, you have wit, you are not at all stupid, you are much wiser than I, but I defy you with this word: 'I love you!'"

And Marius, in a cloudless sky, fancied he heard a strophe sung by a star.

Or else she gave him a little tap, because he coughed, and said to him:

"Do not cough, monsieur. I do not allow anybody to cough in my house without my permission. It is very improper to cough and to disquiet me. I wish you to be well, because if you were not well I should be very unhappy. What will you have me do for you?"

And this was all simply divine.

Once Marius said to Cosette:

"Just fancy, I believed for a time that your name was Ursula."

This made them laugh the whole evening.

In the middle of another conversation he happened to exclaim:

"Oh! one day at the Luxembourg I felt disposed to break the remainder of the bones of an Invalide!"

But he stopped short, and went no further. He would have been obliged to allude to Cosette's garter, and that was impossible.

There was an unknown coast there, the flesh, before which this immense innocent love recoiled with a sort of sacred awe.

Marius imagined life with Cosette like this, without anything else; to come every evening to the Rue Plumet, remove the old complacent bar from the railings of the President, sit down elbow to elbow on this bench, look through the trees at the scintillation of the commencing night, bring the fold in the knee of his trousers into union with the fulness of the dress of Cosette, to caress her thumb-nail, to say to her, "thou," to inhale, one after the other, the odor of the same flower, forever, indefinitely. During this time the clouds passed over their heads. Each time the wind blows it carries off more of the dreams of man than clouds from the sky.

That this chaste, almost stern, love was absolutely without gallantry, we will not say. "To pay compliments" to her whom we love is the first way of giving caresses, an attempted semi-audacity. A compliment is something like a kiss through a veil. Pleasure puts its sweet point there, even while hiding herself. Before pleasure the heart recoils, to love the better. The cajoleries of Marius, all saturated with chimera, were, so to speak, azure-blue. The birds when they are flying on high in the direction of the angels must hear such words.

There was mingled with them, however, life, humanity, the whole amount of positivism of which Marius was capable. It was what is said in a grotto, as a prelude to what will be said in the alcove; a lyrical effusion, the strophe and the sonnet commingled, the gentle hyperboles of cooing, all the refinements of adoration arranged in a bouquet, and exhaling a subtle celestial perfume, an ineffable warbling of heart to heart.

"Oh!" murmured Marius, "how beautiful you are! I dare not look at you. That is the reason why I contemplate you. You are one of the Graces. I do not know what is the matter with me. The hem of your dress, when the tip of your shoe appears, overwhelms me. And then, what an enchanting glow when I catch a glimpse of your thought! You reason astonishingly. It seems to me at times that you are a dream. Speak, I am listening to you, I am admiring you. O Cosette! how strange and charming it is! I am really mad. You are adorable, mademoiselle. I study your feet with the microscope and your soul with the telescope."

And Cosette answered:

"I have been loving you a little more all the time that has passed since this morning."

Questions and answers fared as they might

in this dialogue, always falling at last, upon love, like the elder-pith balls on a nail.

Cosette's whole person was simplicity, ingenuousness, transparency, whiteness, candor, radiance. It might have been said of her that she was pellucid. She produced on everyone who saw her a sensation of April and of Daybreak. There was dew in her eyes. Cosette was a condensation of auroral light in form of a woman.

It was quite natural that Marius adoring her, should admire. But the truth is, that this little school-girl, freshly turned out of a convent, talked with an exquisite penetration, and used at times all sorts of true and delicate words. Her prattle was conversation. She never made mistakes, and saw correctly. Woman feels and speaks with the tender instinct of the heart, that infallibility. No one knows like a woman how to say things at once sweet and profound. Sweetness and profundity, this is the whole of woman; it is the whole of heaven.

In this fulness of felicity there came every instant tears to their eyes. A lady-bird crushed, a feather that fell from a nest, a branch of hawthorn broken, moved their pity, and their ecstasy, gently drowned in melancholy, seemed to ask for nothing but to weep. The most sovereign symptom of love is a

tenderness which becomes at times almost insupportable.

And by the side of this—all these contradictions are the lightning sport of love—they were fond of laughing, and with a ravishing liberty, and so familiarly that, at times, they almost seemed like two boys. Nevertheless, though without their knowledge hearts may be intoxicated with chastity, unforgetable nature is ever there. It is there with its aim, animal and sublime, and whatever the innocence of souls, we feel in the most modest *tête-à-tête* the adorable and mysterious distinction which separates a couple of lovers from a pair of friends.

They idolized each other.

The permanent and the immutable exist. There is loving, there is smiling, there is laughing, there is making little pouts with the lips, there is intertwining the fingers of the hands, there is theeing and thouing, yet that does not hinder eternity. Two lovers conceal themselves in the evening, in the twilight, in the invisible, with the birds, with the roses, they fascinate each other in the shadow with their hearts which they place in their eyes, they murmur, they whisper, and during this time immense constellations of planets fill infinity.

II.

THE STUPEFACTION OF COMPLETE HAPPINESS

They existed vaguely scared with happiness. They did not perceive the cholera which was decimating Paris in that very month. They had made as many confidences to each other as they could, but they had not extended very far beyond their names. Marius had told Cosette that he was an orphan, that he was named Marius Pontmercy, that he was a lawyer, that he lived by writing things for publishers, that his father was a colonel, and that he was a hero, and that he, Marius, had quarreled with his grandfather, who was rich. He had also said a little about being a baron; but this had produced no effect on Cosette. Marius a baron? she did not comprehend. She did not know what the word meant. Marius was Marius. On her part, she had confided to him that she had been brought up at the convent of the Petit-Picpus, that her mother was dead, as well as his, that her father's name was M. Fauchelevent, that he was very good,

that he gave a great deal to the poor, but that he was poor himself, and that he deprived himself of everything, while depriving her of nothing.

Strange to say, in the species of symphony in which Marius had been living since he had seen Cosette, the past, even the most recent, had become so confused and distant to him that what Cosette told him satisfied him fully. He did not even think to speak to her of the nocturnal adventure in the hovel, the Thénardiers, the burning, and of the strange attitude and of the singular flight of her father. Marius had momentarily forgotten all this; he did not know at night what he had done in the morning, nor where he had breakfasted, nor who had spoken to him; he had songs in his ears which rendered him deaf to every other thought, he only existed during the hours when he saw Cosette. Then, as he was in heaven, it was perfectly simple that he should forget the earth. They were both bearing languidly the undefinable weight of immaterial pleasures. Thus live those somnambulists called lovers.

Alas! who is there that has not experienced these things? why comes there an hour when we emerge from this azure, and why does life continue afterwards?

Love almost replaces thought. Love is an ardent forgetfulness of all else. Ask logic,

then, of passion. There is no more an absolute logical chain in the human heart than there is a perfect geometrical figure in the celestial mechanics. For Cosette and Marius nothing more existed than Marius and Cosette. The universe around them had fallen into a gulf. They lived in a golden moment. There was nothing before, nothing behind. It is doubtful if Marius remembered that Cosette had a father. He had in his brain the effacement of bedazzlement. Of what then did they talk, these lovers? We have seen, of flowers, of swallows, of the setting sun, of the rising of the moon, of all important things. They had told themselves everything, except everything. The everything of lovers is nothing. But the father, the realities, that den, those bandits, that adventure, what was the use? and was he quite sure that the nightmare had existed? They were two, they adored each other, there was nothing but that. Everything else was not. It is probable that this oblivion of the hell behind us is inherent to the arrival at Paradise. Have we seen demons? are there any? have we trembled? have we suffered? We know nothing. A roseate cloud is over it all.

These two beings, then, lived in this way, very high up, with all the unverisimilitude which there is in nature; neither at the nadir

nor at the zenith, between man and the seraphim, above the mire, below the ether, in the clouds; scarcely flesh and bone, soul and ecstasy from head to foot; already too sublimated to walk on earth, and still too loaded with humanity to disappear in the sky, in suspension like atoms which are awaiting precipitation; apparently outside of destiny; ignorant of that beaten track, yesterday, to-day, to-morrow; amazed, ready to die, floating; at times light enough for a flight into infinitude; almost ready for the eternal flight.

They were sleeping awake in this rocking-cradle. O splendid lethargy of the real, overthrown by the ideal!

At times, so beautiful was Cosette, Marius closed his eyes before her. With closed eyes is the best way of gazing at the soul.

Marius and Cosette did not ask themselves where this would lead. They looked upon themselves as arrived. It is a strange claim on the part of men to wish that love should lead them somewhere.

III.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SHADOW

Jean Valjean suspected nothing.

Cosette, a little less dreamy than Marius, was gay, and that sufficed to render Jean Valjean happy. The thoughts that Cosette had, her tender preoccupations, the image of Marius which filled her soul, detracted nothing from the incomparable purity of her beautiful, chaste, and smiling forehead. She was at the age when the virgin wears her love as the angel wears his lily. Jean Valjean was, therefore, tranquil. And, then, when two lovers understand each other, things always go very well, any third party who might trouble their love is kept in perfect blindness by a small number of precautions, always the same with all lovers. Hence Cosette never raised any objections with Jean Valjean. Did he wish to take a walk? Yes, my dear father. Did he wish to stay at home? Very well. Did he wish to spend the evening with Cosette? She was in raptures. As he always retired at ten

o'clock in the evening, on those occasions Marius did not come to the garden till after that hour, when he would hear from the street Cosette opening the casement door leading out on the steps. We need not say that Marius was never met by day. Jean Valjean no longer even remembered that Marius existed. Once only, one morning, he happened to say to Cosette: "Hold, how have you something white on your back!" On the previous evening, Marius, in a transport, had pressed Cosette against the wall.

Old Toussaint, who went to bed at an early hour, only thought of going to sleep so soon as her work was finished, and was ignorant of everything, like Jean Valjean.

Marius never set foot in the house. When he was with Cosette, they concealed themselves in a recess near the steps, so that they might not be seen nor heard from the street, and they sat there, contenting themselves often, for all conversation, with pressing their hands twenty times a minute, and gazing at the branches of the trees. At such moments, had a thunderbolt fallen within thirty feet of them, they would not have noticed it, so profoundly was the reverie of the one absorbed and plunged in the reverie of the other.

Limpid purities. The hours all white;

nearly all alike. This genus of love is a collection of leaves of the lily and feathers of the dove.

The whole garden was between them and the street. Each time that Marius came in and went out he carefully readjusted the bar of the railings in such a manner that no disarrangement was visible.

He went away habitually at midnight, and went back to Courfeyrac's lodgings. Courfeyrac said to Bahorel:

"Would you believe it? Marius returns home now at one o'clock in the morning."

Bahorel answered:

"What would you have? There is always a bombshell inside a seminarist."

At times Courfeyrac crossed his arms, assumed a serious air, and said to Marius:

"You are becoming irregular, young man!"

Courfeyrac, a practical man, did not take in good part this reflection of an invisible paradise upon Marius; he had but little taste for unpublished passions, he was impatient at them, and at times he delivered summonses to Marius to return to reality.

One morning he cast at him this admonition:

"My dear fellow, you produce on me the effect for the moment of being situated in the moon, the kingdom of dreams, the province

of illusion, capital Soap Bubble. Come, be a good boy, what is her name?"

But nothing could make Marius "speak out." You might have torn out his nails sooner than one of these two sacred syllables which composed that ineffable name, *Cosette*. True love is luminous as the dawn and silent as the tomb. Only there was, to Courfeyrac, this change in Marius, that his taciturnity was radiant.

During the sweet month of May, Marius and Cosette knew these immense joys:

To quarrel and to say "you," only the better to say "thou" afterwards;

To talk for a long time, and with the most minute details, about people who did not interest them the least in the world; a further proof that in this ravishing opera which is called love, the libretto is almost nothing;

For Marius, to listen to Cosette talking of dress;

For Cosette to listen to Marius talking politics;

To hear, knee against knee, the vehicles roll along the Rue de Babylone;

To gaze upon the same planet in space, or the same worm glistening in the grass;

To keep silence together; a pleasure still greater than to talk;

Etc., etc.

Meanwhile, various complications were approaching.

One evening Marius was going to the rendezvous by the Boulevard des Invalides; he usually walked with his head down; as he was turning the corner of the Rue Plumet, he heard some one say very near to him:

"Good-evening, Monsieur Marius."

He raised his head, and recognized Eponine.

This produced upon him a singular effect. He had not even once thought of this girl since the day when she led him to the Rue Plumet, he had not seen her again, and she had entirely passed out of his mind. He had motives of gratitude only toward her, he owed her his present happiness, and yet it was annoying to him to meet her.

It is an error to believe that passion, when it is happy and pure, leads a man to a state of perfection; it leads him simply, as we have stated, to a state of forgetfulness. In this situation, man forgets to be wicked, but he also forgets to be good. Gratitude, duty, essential and importunate recollections, fade away. At any other time, Marius would have been very different to Eponine. Absorbed by Cosette, he had not very clearly comprehended that this Eponine was named Eponine Thénardier, and that she bore a name written in the will of his father, that name to which he would, a

few months previously, have so ardently devoted himself. We show Marius such as he was. His father himself had disappeared a little from his soul, beneath the splendor of his love.

He replied with some embarrassment:

"Ah! is it you, Eponine?"

"Why do you say to me 'you'? Have I done anything to you?"

"No," answered he.

Certainly, he had nothing against her. Far from it. Only he felt that he could not do otherwise, now that he said "thou" to Cosette than say "you" to Eponine.

As he remained silent, she exclaimed:

"Tell me now . . ."

Then she stopped. It seemed as if words failed this creature, formerly so reckless and so bold. She essayed to smile and could not. She continued:

"Well! . . ."

Then she was silent again, and stood with her eyes cast down.

"Good-night, Monsieur Marius," said she all at once abruptly; and she went away.

IV.

A "CAB" ROLLS IN ENGLISH AND YELPS IN SLANG

The next day—it was the 3d of June, the 3d of June, 1832, a date which must be indicated owing to the grave events which were at that epoch suspended over the horizon of Paris in the state of lightning-charged clouds. Marius at nightfall was following the same road as on the previous evening, with the same ravishing thoughts in his heart, when he perceived between the trees of the boulevard Eponine coming toward him. Two days running, it was too much. He turned hastily back, quitted the boulevard, changed his route, and went to the Rue Plumet by the Rue Monsieur.

This caused Eponine to follow him as far as the Rue Plumet, a thing she never had done before. She had contented herself, hitherto, with watching him on his way along the boulevard, without even attempting to meet him. The evening before, only, had she essayed to speak to him.

Eponine followed him, then, without his

suspecting it. She saw him move the bar of the railing aside and glide into the garden.

"Hilloh!" said she, "he goes into the house!"

She approached the grating, felt of the bars one after the other, and easily recognized the one which Marius had removed.

She murmured in a low voice, and with a lugubrious accent:

"None of that, Lisette!"

She sat down on the basement of the railing, close beside the bar, as if she were guarding it. It was precisely the spot where the railing touched the neighboring wall. There was an obscure corner there, in which Eponine entirely disappeared.

She remained thus for more than an hour without stirring and without breathing, a prey to her own thoughts.

About ten o'clock in the evening, one of the two or three passers-by along the Rue Plumet, a belated old bourgeois, who was hurrying along this deserted and ill-famed place, when in passing by the side of the grating of the garden, he had arrived at the angle which the grating made with the wall, heard a dull and menacing voice which said:

"I am not surprised now that he comes every evening!"

The passer-by cast his eyes about him, saw

nobody, did not dare to peer into this dark corner, and was very much frightened. He doubled his pace.

This passer-by had reason for hurrying, for, a very few minutes after, six men, who were walking separately, and at some distance the one from the other along the wall, and who might have been taken for a drunken patrol, entered the Rue Plumet.

The first who reached the railing of the garden stopped and waited for the others; a second after, they were all six together.

These men began to talk in a low voice.

"It is *icicaille*," said one of them.

"Is there *un cab* (a dog) in the garden?" demanded another.

"I don't know. In any case I have *levé* (that is, brought, from the Spanish *llevar*,) a ball which we will make it *morfiler* (eat)."

"Have you got some mastic *pour frangir la vanterne*?"

In argot this was to "break a pane" by means of a plaster of mastic, which, sticking to the window, holds the pieces of glass and prevents noise.

"Yes."

"The railing is old," remarked a fifth, who had a voice of a ventriloquist.

"So much the better," said the second who had spoken. "*Elle ne criblera* (It will make no

noise) under the *bastringue* (saw), and won't be so hard *faucher* (to cut through)."

The sixth, who had not yet opened his mouth, began examining the railing as Eponine had done an hour before, grasping each bar successively, and shaking them carefully. In this way he came to the bar which Marius had loosened. As he was about to seize this bar, a hand, suddenly emerging from the darkness, clutched his arm, he felt himself thrust roughly back by the middle of his chest, and a hoarse voice said to him without crying out:

"There's *un cab* (a dog)."

At the same time he saw a pale girl standing before him.

The man felt that shock which the unexpected always gives. He bristled up hideously; nothing is so formidable to look at as startled wild beasts; their appearance when terrified is terrifying. He recoiled and stammered:

"Who is this hussy?"

"Your daughter."

It was, in truth, Eponine who was speaking to Thénardier.

On the apparition of Eponine, the other five, that is to say, Claquesous, Gueulemer, Babet, Montparnasse, and Brujon, approached without a sound, without precipitation, with-

out saying a word, with the sinister slowness peculiar to these men of the night.

Some strangely hideous tools could be distinguished in their hands. Gueulemer held a pair of those short pincers which the prowlers call *fanchons*.

"Ah! there! what are you doing here? what do you want of us? are you mad?" exclaimed Thénardier, as far as it is possible to exclaim in a whisper. "Have you come to hinder us from working?"

Eponine burst into a laugh, and leaped on his neck.

"I am here, my darling father, because I am here. Is there no permit to persons to sit down on the stones, just now? It is you who oughtn't to be here. What have you come to do, since it is a biscuit? I told Magnon so. There is nothing to do here. But embrace me, my good, darling father! What a long time it is since I have seen you! You are out, then?"

Thénardier tried to free himself from the arms of Eponine, and growled:

"That's all right. You have embraced me. Yes, I am out. I'm not in. Now, be off."

But Eponine did not loose her hold, and redoubled her caresses.

"My darling father, how did you do it?

You must have a good deal of wit to get out from there.

"Tell me about it! And my mother? where is my mother? Give me some news of mamma."

Thénardier replied:

"She's all right, I don't know, leave me, I tell you, be off."

"I do not exactly want to go off," said Eponine, with the lackadaisicalness of a spoiled child, "you send me away, though I haven't seen you now for four months, and I have scarce had time to embrace you."

And she caught her father again around the neck.

"Ah! but come, this is a bore!" said Babet.

"Hurry up!" said Gueulemer, "the *coqueurs* (the police) may come along."

The ventriloquial voice hummed this distich:

> "*Nous n'sommes pas le jour de l'an,*
> *A bécoter papa, maman.*"
>
> ("This is not the first day of the year,
> To hug your papa and ma dear.")

Eponine turned to the five bandits.

"Why, this is Monsieur Brujon.—Good-evening, Monsieur Babet.—Good-evening, Monsieur Claquesous.—Can it be, that you don't recognize me, Monsieur Gueulemer?—How goes it, Montparnasse?"

"Yes, they recognize you!" said Thénardier. "But good-day, good-night, keep off! let us alone."

"It is the hour for foxes, and not for chickens," said Montparnasse.

"Don't you see that we *goupiner icigo* (have work here)?" added Babet.

Eponine took the hand of Montparnasse.

"Take care!" said he, "you will cut yourself, for I have an open *lingre* (knife)."

"My darling Montparnasse," replied Eponine very gently, "confidence ought to be placed in people. I am my father's daughter, perhaps. Monsieur Babet, Monsieur Gueulemer, it is I who was charged to find out about this affair."

It is remarkable that Eponine did not speak argot. Ever since she had known Marius that frightful language had become impossible to her.

She pressed with her little hand, as bony and feeble as the hand of a skeleton, the great coarse fingers of Gueulemer, and continued: "You know very well that I am not a fool. Ordinarily, people believe me. I have done you service on occasions. Well, I have made inquiries, you would expose yourselves uselessly, do you see. I swear to you that there is nothing to do in this house."

"There are lone women," said Gueulemer.

"No. The people have moved away."

"The candles haven't, anyhow!" said Babet.

And he showed Eponine, over the tops of the trees, a light which was moving about the garret of the cottage. It was Toussaint who was up so late to hang out some linen to dry.

Eponine made a final effort.

"Well," said she, "they are very poor people, and it is a shanty where there isn't a sou."

"Go to the devil!" cried Thénardier. "When we have turned the house topsy-turvy, and have placed the cellar at the top and the attics at the bottom, we will tell you what there is inside, and whether they are *balles*, *ronds*, or *broques* (francs, sous, or farthings)."

And he pushed her to pass by.

"My good friend, Monsieur Montparnasse," said Eponine, "I beg you, who are a good boy, don't go in!"

"Take care, now, you'll cut yourself!" replied Montparnasse.

Thénardier remarked, with that decisive accent he had:

"Clear out, fairy, and leave men to attend to their business."

Eponine let go the hand of Montparnasse, which she had seized again, and said:

"You intend to go into this house, then?"

"Just so!" said the ventriloquist, with a sneer.

She put her back against the railing, faced these six bandits armed to the teeth, and to whom night gave the faces of demons, and said in a firm and low voice:

"Well, I, I will not let you."

They stopped, astounded. The ventriloquist, however, completed his malicious laugh. She continued:

"Friends! listen well. That isn't the thing. Now I speak. In the first place, if you go into the garden, if you touch this railing, I will scream, I will knock at doors, I will wake people, I will have you all six arrested, I'll call the police."

"She would do it," said Thénardier in a low tone to Brujon and to the ventriloquist.

She shook her head and added:

"Beginning with my father."

Thénardier approached her.

"Not so close, my good man!" said she.

He fell back, growling between his teeth: "Why, what is the matter with her?" And he added:

"Slut!"

She began to laugh in a terrible fashion.

"As you please, you shall not go in. I am not the daughter of a dog, since I am the

daughter of a wolf. You are six, but what does that concern me? You are men. Well, I am a woman. You can't frighten me, go. I tell you, you shall not enter this house because it don't please me. If you approach, I shall bark. I have told you, I am the *cab* (the dog). I don't care a rap for you. Go your way, you annoy me! Go where you like, but don't come here, I forbid it! You have sharp knives, and I have quick feet, that's equal, come on!"

She advanced a step toward the bandits, she was terrible, she began to laugh.

"Pardine! I'm not afraid. This summer I shall be hungry, this winter I shall be cold. Are they jokers, these fools of men to think they can frighten a girl! Of what! Afraid? Ah, pshaw! that's pretty! Because you have chatter-boxes for mistresses who crawl under the bed when you speak with a big voice, it won't do here! I, I am afraid of nothing!"

She kept her eye fixed on Thénardier, and said:

"Not even of you, my father!"

Then she continued, as she turned on the bandits her spectral, blood-shot eyeballs:

"What does it matter to me whether I am picked up to-morrow in the Rue Plumet on the pavement beaten to death with a club by my father, or whether I am found a year hence

in the ditches of Saint-Cloud or at the Isle des Cygnes, among old rotting corks and drowned dogs!"

She was forced to break off, a dry cough caught her, her breath came from her narrow and feeble chest like a death-rattle.

She continued:

"I have only to cry out, people will come, slap-bang. You are six; I am everybody."

Thénardier made a movement toward her.

"Don't approach!" cried she.

He stopped, and said to her gently:

"Well, no. I will not approach, but don't you talk so loud. My daughter, do you wish to prevent us from working? We must, however, earn our living. Have you no more affection for your father?"

"You bother me," said Eponine.

"Still we must live, we must eat . . ."

"Die."

This said, she sat down on the basement of the railing, humming:

"Mon bras si dodu
Ma jambe bien faite,
Et le temps perdu."

("So plump is my arm,
My leg so well formed,
Yet my age has no charm.")

She had her elbow on her knee, and her chin in her hand, and she balanced her foot with

an air of indifference. Her ragged gown displayed her thin shoulder-blades. The neighboring lamp lit up her profile and her attitude. Nothing could be seen more resolute or more surprising.

The six burglars, amazed and sullen at being held in check by a girl, went under the protecting shadow of the lantern and held counsel, with humiliated and furious shrugs of their shoulders.

She, however, looked at them with a peaceful but stern air.

"Something's the matter with her," said Babet. "There's a reason. Is she in love with the *cab* (dog)? It's a pity, however, to lose the job. Two women, an old fellow who lives in a backyard; there are some not bad curtains at the windows. The old fellow must be *un guinal* (a Jew). I believe it's a good thing."

"Ah! well, go in, the rest of you," exclaimed Montparnasse. "Do the job. I will stay with the girl, and if she goes wrong . . ."

He let gleam in the lamplight the knife which he held open in his hand.

Thénardier did not say a word, and seemed ready for anything they liked.

Brujon, who was a bit of an oracle, and who, as we know, "put up the job," had not yet spoken. He seemed thoughtful. He passed

for recoiling at nothing, and it was notorious that he had plundered from sheer bravado a police-office. Moreover, he wrote verses and songs, which gave him a great authority.

Babet questioned him.

"Have you nothing to say, Brujon?"

Brujon still remained silent for a moment, then shook his head in several different ways, and at last decided to speak.

"Look here: I encountered this morning two sparrows fighting; this evening I run against a woman who quarrels. All that is bad. Let us be off."

They went away.

As they went, Montparnasse murmured:

"It's all right, but if you had wished it, I would have made her feel the weight of my thumb."

Babet replied:

"Not I. I don't strike a lady."

At the corner of the street they stopped and exchanged in a smothered voice this enigmatical dialogue:

"Where are we going to sleep to-night?"

"*Sous Pantin* (Under Paris)."

"Have you the key of the grating with you, Thénardier?"

"*Pardi.*"

Eponine, who had not taken her eyes off them, saw them return by the road by which

they had come. She rose and began to creep behind them along the walls and the houses. She followed them thus as far as the boulevard. There they separated, and she saw the six men sink away in obscurity, into which they seemed to melt.

V.

THINGS OF THE NIGHT

After the departure of the bandits the Rue Plumet resumed its calm, nocturnal aspect.

What had just taken place in this street would not have astonished a forest. The trees, the coppices, the heather, the branches roughly interlaced, the tall grass, exist in a sombre manner; the savage crowd catches glimpses there of the sudden apparitions of the invisible; there, what is below man is distinguishable through the mist from what is above man; and things unknown to us living beings confront each other there in the night. Nature, bristling and tawny, is startled by certain approaches, in which it seems to feel the supernatural. The forces of the shadow know each other and have a mysterious equilibrium between themselves. Teeth and claws dread the indiscernible. Blood-thirsty bestiality, voracious, starving appetites in search of prey, the instincts armed with nails and jaws, which

have for their source and aim the belly, look and sniff with inquietude at the impassive spectral lineament prowling about in a winding-sheet, standing erect in this vaguely rustling robe, and which seems to them to live a dead and terrible life. These brutalities, which are only matter, have a confused fear at having to do with the immense obscurity condensed into an unknown being. A black figure barring the passage stops short the wild beast. That which comes from the cemetery intimidates and disconcerts that which comes from the den; the ferocious has a fear of the sinister; wolves recoil when encountering a ghoul.

VI.

MARIUS BECOMES REAL TO THE POINT OF GIVING HIS ADDRESS TO COSETTE

While this species of dog in human form was mounting guard against the railing, and the six bandits were slinking away before a girl, Marius was with Cosette.

Never had the sky been more studded with stars and more charming, the trees more rustling, the smell of the grass more penetrating; never had the birds fallen asleep beneath the leaves with a noise more sweet; never had all the harmonies of universal serenity better responded to the interior music of love; never had Marius been more enamored, more happy, more in ecstasy. But he had found Cosette sad. Cosette had been crying. Her eyes were red.

It was the first cloud in this admirable dream.

The first word of Marius had been:

"What is the matter?"

And she had replied:

"See."

Then she sat down on the bench near the steps, and while he took his place, all trembling, beside her, she continued:

"My father told me this morning to hold myself in readiness, that he had business, and that we probably were going away."

Marius shuddered from head to foot.

When we reach the end of life, to die, means to part; when we are at the beginning, to part, means to die.

For six weeks past, Marius, little by little, slowly, by degrees, had each day taken possession of Cosette. A possession, all ideal but profound. As we have already explained, in first love, men take the soul long before the body; later they take the body long before the soul, sometimes they do not take the soul at all; the Faublas and Prudhommes add: because there is no such thing; but the sarcasm is fortunately a blasphemy. Marius, then, possessed Cosette as minds possess; but he enveloped her with his whole soul, and jealously seized her with an incredible conviction. He possessed her smile, her breath, her perfume, the deep flash of her blue eyes, the softness of her skin when he touched her hand, the charming mark that she had on her neck, all her thoughts. They had agreed never to sleep without dreaming the one of the other, and they had kept their word. He possessed,

then, all the dreams of Cosette. He looked at her without cessation, and sometimes breathed on the short hairs which she had on her neck, and said to himself that there was not one of those short hairs that did not belong to him, Marius. He contemplated and he adored the things she wore, her knot of ribbon, her gloves, her cuffs, her slippers, as sacred objects, of which he was the master. He thought that he was the lord of the pretty tortoise-shell combs which she had in her hair, and he said to himself, in the dim and confused stammering of dawning desire, that there was not a seam of her dress, not a mesh of her stockings, not a fold in her corset, which was not his. By the side of Cosette he felt near his wealth, near his property, near his despot and his slave. It seemed that they had so blended their souls that, if they had wished to take them back, it would have been impossible for them to identify them.—"This one is mine."—"No, it is mine."—"I assure you that you are mistaken. This is really I."—"What you take for you is I." Marius was something that formed a part of Cosette, and Cosette was something that formed a part of Marius. Marius felt Cosette live in him. To have Cosette, to possess Cosette, this to him was not different from breathing. It was in the midst of this faith, of this intoxication,

of this virginal possession, extraordinary and absolute, of this sovereignty, that these words: "We are going away," fell all at once upon him, and that the stern voice of reality cried to him: "Cosette is not for thee!"

Marius awoke. For six weeks Marius had lived, as we have said, outside of life; these words "going away!" made him roughly re-enter it.

He could not find a word. Cosette knew only that his hand was very cold. She said to him in her turn:

"What is the matter?"

He answered, so low that Cosette could hardly hear him:

"I do not understand what you have said."

She continued:

"This morning my father told me to arrange all my little affairs, and to hold myself ready, that he would give me his linen to put in a trunk, that he was obliged to take a journey, that we were going away, that we must have a large trunk for myself and a small one for him, to get all this ready within a week, and that we probably should go to England."

"But that is monstrous!" exclaimed Marius.

It is certain that, at this moment, in the mind of Marius, no abuse of power, no violence, no abomination of the most prodigious tyrants, no action of Busiris, of Tiberius, or

of Henry VIII., was equal in ferocity to this: M. Fauchelevent taking his daughter to England because he had business.

He asked in a feeble voice:

"And when will you start?"

"He did not say when."

"And when will you return?"

"He did not say when."

Marius rose and said coldly:

"Cosette, will you go?"

Cosette turned to him, her beautiful eyes full of anguish, and answered, with a species of bewilderment:

"Where?"

"To England? will you go?"

"Why do you speak to me so?"

"I ask you if you will go?"

"What would you have me do?" said she, clasping her hands.

"Then, you will go?"

"If my father goes there?"

"Then, you will go?"

Cosette took the hand of Marius, and pressed it without answering.

"Very well," said Marius. "Then I shall go elsewhere."

Cosette felt the meaning of this word even more than she comprehended it. She turned so pale that her face became white in the obscurity. She stammered:

"What do you mean?"

Marius looked at her, then slowly raised his eyes to heaven, and replied:

"Nothing."

When his eyes were lowered again he saw Cosette smiling at him. The smile of the woman that we love has a brilliancy which we can see by night.

"How foolish we are! Marius, I have an idea."

"What?"

"Go, if we go! I will tell you where! Come and join me where I am."

Marius was now a man thoroughly awakened. He had fallen back into reality. He cried to Cosette:

"Go with you! are you mad! Why, it would require money, and I have none! Go to England? why, I owe now, I don't know at all, more than ten louis to Courfeyrac, one of my friends, whom you do not know! But I have an old hat, which is not worth three francs, I have a coat which wants buttons in front, my shirt is all torn, I am out at elbows, my boots let in the water; for six weeks I have not thought of it, and I have not told you of it. Cosette! I am a miserable wretch. You only see me at night and you give me your love; if you were to see me by day you would give me a sou! Go to England! Why, I

have not the wherewithal to pay for the passport!"

He threw himself against a tree which stood there, standing with his two arms over his head, his forehead against the bark, neither feeling the wood that grazed his skin nor the fever which was hammering his temples, motionless, and ready to fall, like a statue of despair.

He remained for a long time thus. People might remain for an eternity in such abysses. At last he turned. He heard behind him a little stifled sound, soft and sad.

It was Cosette sobbing.

She had been crying more than two hours by the side of Marius, who had been thinking.

He went up to her, fell on his knees, and, prostrating himself slowly, took the tip of her foot, which peeped from under her dress, and kissed it.

She let him do so in silence. There are moments when a woman accepts, like a goddess sombre and resigned, the religion of love.

"Do not weep," said he.

She murmured:

"But I am, perhaps, going away, and you are not able to come!"

He said:

"Do you love me?"

She replied by sobbing that word of Para-

dise, which is never more charming than when it comes through tears:

"I adore you!"

He pursued, with a tone of voice which was an inexpressible caress:

"Do not weep. Tell me, will you do so much for me as not to weep?"

"Do you love me, you?" said she.

He took her hand.

"Cosette, I have never pledged my word of honor to anyone, because my word of honor frightens me. I feel that my father is at my side. Well, now, I give you my most sacred word of honor, that if you go away, I shall die."

There was in the accent with which he pronounced these words a melancholy so solemn and so tranquil that Cosette trembled. She felt that chill which is given by the passing of a sombre and true thing. From the shock she ceased to weep.

"Now, listen," said he. "Do not expect me to-morrow."

"Why not?"

"Do not expect me till the day after to-morrow."

"Oh! why not?"

"You will see."

"A day without seeing you! but that is impossible."

"Let us sacrifice a day to have, perhaps, a whole life."

And Marius added in a low voice and aside:

"He is a man who never makes a change in his habits, and he has never received anybody till the evening."

"Of what man are you speaking?" demanded Cosette.

"I? I did not say anything."

"What do you hope for, then?"

"Wait till the day after to-morrow."

"You wish it?"

"Yes, Cosette."

She took his head in her two hands, rising on tiptoe to reach his height, and tried to see his hope in his eyes.

Marius added:

"It occurs to me, that you ought to know my address, something may happen, we never know, I live with that friend named Courfeyrac, Rue de la Verrerie, number 16."

He felt in his pocket and took out a penknife, and with the blade wrote on the plaster of the wall:

16, Rue de la Verrerie.

Cosette, meanwhile, had begun to look in his eyes again.

"Tell me your idea. Marius, you have an

idea. Tell it me. Oh! tell it me, so that I may pass a good night!"

"My idea is this: it is impossible that God can wish us to separate. Expect me the day after to-morrow."

"What shall I do till then?" said Cosette. "You, you are out of doors, you come, you go. How happy men are! I shall remain all alone. Oh! how sad I shall be! What will you do to-morrow evening, tell me?"

"I shall try a plan."

"Then I will pray God, and I will think of you from now till then, that you may succeed. I will not question you any more, since you wish me not. You are my master. I will spend my evening, to-morrow, in singing the music from *Euryanthe*, which you love, and which you came one evening to hear behind my shutters. But the day after to-morrow you will come early. I shall expect you at night, at nine o'clock exactly, I warn you. My God! how sad it is that the days are so long! You hear, as it is striking nine, I shall be in the garden."

"And I also."

And without saying a word, moved by the same thought, drawn by those electric currents which place two lovers in continual communication, both intoxicated with pleasure, even in their grief, they fell into each other's arms, without perceiving that their lips were joined

together, while their upraised eyes, overflowing with ecstasy and full of tears, contemplated the stars.

When Marius left, the street was deserted. It was the moment when Eponine was following the bandits to the boulevard.

While Marius dreamed, his head leaning against the tree, an idea had crossed his mind; an idea, alas! which he himself deemed senseless and impossible. He had formed a desperate resolution.

VII.

THE OLD HEART AND THE YOUNG HEART FACE TO FACE

Father Gillenormand had at this period fully completed his ninety-first year. He still lived with Mademoiselle Gillenormand at number 6, Rue des Filles-du-Calvaire, in the old house, which was his own property. He was, it will be remembered, one of those antique old men who await death perfectly erect, whom age loads without making them bend, and whom even sorrow itself cannot bow.

Still, for some time past, his daughter had said: "My father is breaking." He no longer boxed the ears of the servants; he struck his cane with less vigor on the landing of the staircase when Basque was slow in opening the door. The revolution of July had not exasperated him more than six months. He had seen almost with tranquility in the *Moniteur* this association of words: "M. Humblot-Conté, Peer of France." The fact is, that the old man was filled with dejection. He did not bend, he did not surrender, that was no more

a part of his physical nature than it was a part of his moral nature; but he felt himself inwardly failing. For four years he had been awaiting Marius with his foot down, that is just the word, with the conviction that the worthless young scapegrace would ring at his door one day or another; now he had come, in certain gloomy hours, to say to himself that if Marius should remain away even a little longer . . . It was not death that was insupportable to him, it was the idea that perhaps he might not see Marius again. Not see Marius again, that idea had not entered into his head until this day; now this idea began to appear to him, and it chilled him. Absence, as always happens in natural and true feelings, had only heightened the love of the grandfather for the ungrateful boy who had gone away like that. It is on December nights, when there are ten degrees of frost, that we think most of the sun. M. Gillenormand was, or fancied himself, utterly incapable of taking a step, he the grandfather, toward his grandson;—"I would rot first," said he. He did not think himself at all in the wrong, but he only thought of Marius with profound tenderness, and the mute despair of an old fellow who is going down into darkness.

He was beginning to lose his teeth, which added to his sadness.

M. Gillenormand, without, however, avowing it to himself, for he would have been furious and ashamed of it, had never loved a mistress as he loved Marius.

He had had placed in his room, at the foot of his bed, as the first thing which he wished to see on awaking, an old portrait of his other daughter, the one who was dead, Madame Pontmercy, a portrait taken when she was eighteen years old. He looked at this portrait incessantly. He happened one day to say, while gazing at it:

"I find that there is a likeness."

"To my sister?" remarked Mademoiselle Gillenormand. "Oh, yes."

The old man added:

"And to him, also."

Once, when he was sitting, with his knees one against the other, and his eyes almost closed, in a posture of dejection, his daughter ventured to say to him:

"Father, are you still so angry with . . .?"

She stopped, not daring to go further.

"With whom?" demanded he.

"With that poor Marius?"

He raised his old head, laid his thin and wrinkled fist on the table, and cried, in his most irritated and most quivering accent:

"Poor Marius, you say! That gentleman is a scoundrel, a wicked beggar, a little vain

ingrate, without heart, without soul, a proud, a bad man!"

And he turned away, so that his daughter might not see a tear which he had in his eyes.

Three days later he interrupted a silence which had lasted four hours to say to his daughter, snappishly:

"I have had the honor to beg Mademoiselle Gillenormand never to mention his name to me."

Aunt Gillenormand gave up all attempts, and formed this profound diagnostic:—"My father never loved my sister very much after her folly. It is clear that he detests Marius."

"After her folly" signified: "since she had married the colonel."

Still, as may have been conjectured, Mad emoiselle Gillenormand had failed in her attempt to substitute her favorite, the officer of lancers, for Marius.

The supplanter Théodule had not succeeded. M. Gillenormand had refused to accept the *quid pro quo*. A void in the heart does not readily accept a substitute. Théodule, on his side, while sniffing the inheritance, felt a repugnance to the drudgery of pleasing. The old gentleman wearied the lancer, while the lancer shocked the old gentleman. Lieutenant Théodule was gay without doubt, but a babbler; frivolous, but vulgar; a good liver, but

of bad company; he had mistresses, it is true, and he talked a good deal about them, that is also true; but then he talked badly. All his qualities had a defect. M. Gillenormand was worn out with listening to the account of the favors he had won round his barracks, Rue de Babylone. And then Lieutenant Théodule sometimes came in uniform with the tricolor cockade. This rendered him simply impossible. Father Gillenormand had finished by saying to his daughter: "I have had enough of Théodule. I have little taste for warriors in times of peace. You can receive them if you like. I do not know but that I love the sabres a little better than the trailers of the sabres. The clash of blades in a battle is less miserable, after all, than the noise of scabbards on the pavement. And, then, to carry one's self like a bully, and to lace one's self like a silly woman, to wear a corset under a cuirass, is to be ridiculous twice over. When a man is a real man he keeps himself at an equal distance from braggadocio and from roguery. Neither bully nor heartless. Keep your Théodule for yourself."

His daughter in vain said to him: "Still, he is your grandnephew," it turned out that M. Gillenormand, who was grandfather to the tips of his fingers, was not a granduncle at all.

The fact is, that as he was a man of sense

and made the comparison, Théodule only served to make him the more regret Marius.

One evening, it was the 4th of June, which did not prevent Father Gillenormand from having a very good fire in his fire-place, he had sent away his daughter, who was sewing in the adjoining room. He was alone in his apartment with the rural hangings, his feet on the andirons, half enveloped in his vast Coromandel screen with nine folds, leaning on his elbow at his table on which two candles burned under a green shade, swallowed up in his tapestried arm-chair, a book in his hand, but not reading. He was dressed, according to his wont, as an *Incroyable*, and resembled an old portrait by Garat. This would have caused him to be followed in the streets, but his daughter always covered him, when he went out, in a huge episcopal wadded great-coat, which hid his dress. At home, save when he got up and went to bed, he never wore a dressing-gown. *It gives an old look*, said he.

Father Gillenormand was thinking of Marius lovingly and bitterly, and, as usual, the bitterness predominated. His increase of tenderness always ended by boiling over and by turning into indignation. He was at that point where a man seeks to take a part and to accept that which lacerates one. He was

in cue for explaining to himself that there was now no more any reason for the return of Marius, that if he had been going to return he would have done so already, that he must give it up. He tried to form the idea that it was all over, and that he should die without seeing "that gentleman" again. But his whole nature revolted; his old paternity could not consent to it. "What!" said he, this was his dolorous refrain, "he will not come back!" His old bald head had fallen on his chest, and he vaguely began to fix upon the embers on his hearth a lamentable and irritated glance.

In the depth of this reverie his old servant, Basque, came in and asked:

"Can monsieur receive Monsieur Marius?"

The old man straightened himself up, pallid, and like a corpse which is roused by a galvanic shock. All his blood had flowed back to his heart. He stammered:

"Monsieur Marius what?"

"I do not know," replied Basque, intimidated and disconcerted by the air of his master, "I did not see him. It was Nicolette who just now said to me: 'There is a young man here, say it is Monsieur Marius.'"

Father Gillenormand stammered in a low voice:

"Show him in."

And he remained in the same attitude, his head shaking, his eye fixed on the door. It opened. A young man entered. It was Marius.

Marius stopped at the door, as if waiting to be asked to enter.

His almost wretched clothes could not be seen in the obscurity produced by the shade. Only his face, calm and grave, but strangely sad, could be distinguished.

Father Gillenormand, stupefied by astonishment and joy, remained a few minutes without seeing anything but a brilliancy, as when one is in the presence of an apparition. He was ready to faint; he perceived Marius through a mist. It was really he, it was really Marius!

At last! after four years! He seized him, so to speak, all over at a glance. He found him handsome, noble, distinguished, grown, a thorough man, with a proper attitude, a charming air. He longed to open his arms, to call him, to throw himself on him, his bowels gushed on him in ravishment, affectionate words welled up and overflowed his bosom; indeed, all this tenderness started up and reached his lips, yet through the contrast which was the groundwork of his nature a harshness issued from it. He said brusquely:

"What is it you come here for?"

Marius replied, with embarrassment:

"Monsieur . . ."

Monsieur Gillenormand would have had Marius throw himself into his arms. He was dissatisfied with Marius and with himself. He felt that he was rough and that Marius was cold. It was to the old gentleman an insupportable and irritating anxiety to feel himself so tender and so in tears within, yet unable to be otherwise than harsh without. The bitterness returned. He interrupted Marius with a sharp accent:

"Then what do you come for?"

This "then" signified: *if you have not come to embrace me.* Marius gazed at his grandfather, whose pallor had changed to a visage of marble.

"Monsieur . . ."

The old gentleman continued in a severe voice:

"Have you come to ask my pardon? have you recognized your faults?"

He believed that he was putting Marius on the track, and that "the boy" was going to bend. Marius trembled; it was the disavowal of his father that was demanded; he lowered his eyes and replied:

"No, monsieur."

"And then," the old man exclaimed, im-

petuously, with a sorrow, poignant and full of anger, "what is it you do want with me?"

Marius clasped his hands, advanced a step, and said in a feeble and trembling voice:

"Monsieur, have pity on me."

This word moved M. Gillenormand; spoken sooner, it would have softened him, but it came too late. The grandfather arose; he rested on his cane with both hands, his lips were white, his forehead quivered, but his lofty stature dominated the stooping Marius.

"Pity on you, monsieur! This is a youth who asks pity of an old man of ninety-one years! You are entering on life, I am leaving it; you go to the play, to balls, to the café, to the billiard-table, you have wit, you please the women, you are a pretty fellow; while I spit on my logs in the middle of summer; you are rich with the only wealth there is, I have all the poverties of old age, infirmity, isolation! you have your thirty-two teeth, a good stomach, a quick eye, strength, appetite, health, gayety, a forest of black hair; I have not even my white hair left, I have lost my teeth, I am losing my legs, I am losing my memory, there are three names of streets which I confound incessantly, the Rue Charlot, the Rue du Chaume, and the Rue Saint-Claude, there is where I am; you have the whole future before you full of sunshine, I am beginning not

to see a drop more of it, so far have I advanced into the night; you are in love, that goes without saying, I am not beloved by a soul in the world, and you ask pity of me! Parbleu, Molière forgot that. If that is the way in which you jest at the palace of justice, Messieurs the Advocates, I offer you my most sincere compliments. You are droll fellows."

And the octogenarian added, in an incensed and wrathful voice:

"Well, what is it you want of me?"

"Monsieur," said Marius, "I know that my presence displeases you, but I have only come to ask of you one thing, and then I will go away at once."

"You are a fool!" said the old man. "Who tells you to go away?"

This was the translation of the tender words which he had at the bottom of his heart: *Ask my pardon, then! Throw yourself on my neck!* M. Gillenormand felt that Marius was going to leave him in a few moments, that his bad reception rebuffed him, that his harshness was driving him away, he said all this to himself, and his anguish was increased by it, and as his grief immediately turned into anger his harshness augmented. He had wished that Marius should understand, and Marius did not understand; this it was that rendered the old gentleman furious. He continued:

"What! you have left me, me, your grandfather, you have left my house to go nobody knows where, you have afflicted your aunt, you have gone, that's easily guessed, for it is more convenient, to lead a bachelor's life, to play the fop, to come home at all hours, to amuse yourself, you have not given me a sign of life, you have incurred debts without even asking me to pay them, you have been a breaker of windows and a blusterer, and, at the end of four years, you come to my house and you have nothing else to say to me than that!"

This violent fashion of pushing the grandson into tenderness produced only silence on the part of Marius. M. Gillenormand crossed his arms, a gesture which with him, was particularly imperious, and apostrophized Marius bitterly:

"Let us finish. You have come to ask something of me, you say? Well, what? what is it? Speak."

"Monsieur," said Marius, with the look of a man who feels that he is going to fall over a precipice, "I have come to ask your permission to marry."

M. Gillenormand rang the bell. Basque half opened the door.

"Send my daughter here."

A second later, the door opened again, Mademoiselle Gillenormand did not enter,

but showed herself; Marius was standing, silent, his arms hanging down, with the look of a criminal; M. Gillenormand was going and coming up and down the room. He turned toward his daughter and said to her:

"Nothing. This is Monsieur Marius. Bid him good-evening. Monsieur wishes to marry. There. Be off."

The sound of the sharp and hoarse voice of the old man announced a strange fulness of passion. The aunt looked at Marius with a bewildered air, appeared hardly to recognize him, allowed neither a gesture nor a syllable to escape her, and disappeared before the breath of her father quicker than a straw before a hurricane.

In the meanwhile, Father Gillenormand had come back, and was leaning with his back against the mantel-piece.

"You marry! at twenty-one years! You have arranged that! You have only a permission to ask! a formality! Sit down, monsieur. Well, you have had a revolution since I have had the honor of seeing you. The Jacobins have had the upper hand. You ought to be content. Are you not a republican since you have become a baron? You arrange that. The republic is a sauce to the barony. Are you decorated by July? have you taken a little bit of the Louvre, monsieur? There is close

by here, in the Rue Saint-Antoine, opposite the Rue des Nonaindières, a ball incrusted in the wall of the third story of a house with this inscription: July 28, 1830. Go and look at it. It produces a good effect. Ah! your friends do pretty things! By the way, are they not erecting a fountain on the site of the monument of M. the Duke de Berry? So you wish to marry? whom? may it be asked without indiscretion, whom?"

He stopped, and, before Marius had had time to answer, he added violently:

"Ah, come, you have a profession? a fortune made? how much do you earn by your trade as a lawyer?"

"Nothing," said Marius, with a sort of firmness and a resolution almost fierce.

"Nothing? you have nothing to live on but the twelve hundred livres which I allow you?"

Marius made no reply. M. Gillenormand continued:

"In that case, I apprehend that the young lady is rich?"

"Like myself."

"What! no dowry?"

"No."

"Some expectations?"

"I believe not."

"Quite naked! and what is the father?"

"I do not know."

"And what is her name?"

"Mademoiselle Fauchelevent."

"Fauchewhat?"

"Fauchelevent."

"Pttt!" said the old man.

"Monsieur!" cried Marius.

M. Gillenormand interrupted him, with the tone of a man who is talking to himself.

"That is it, twenty-one years, no profession, twelve hundred livres a year, Madame la Baronne Pontmercy will go to buy two sous' worth of parsley at the green-grocer's."

"Monsieur," replied Marius, in the wildness of the last vanishing hope, "I supplicate you! I conjure you in the name of Heaven, with clasped hands, monsieur, I throw myself at your feet, permit me to marry her."

The old man burst into a sharp and lugubrious laugh, through which he coughed and said:

"Ah! ah! ah! you said to yourself: 'Pardine! I'll go and see that old periwig, that absurd dolt! What a pity that I am not five-and-twenty years! how I would toss him a very respectful summons! how I would give him the go-by! That's all right, I would say to him: Old idiot, you are too glad to see me, I feel inclined to marry Miss no-matter-whom, the daughter of Monsieur no-matter-whom, I

have no shoes, she has no chemise, all right, I am inclined to throw into the river my career, my future, my youth, my life, I am inclined to make a plunge into misery with a wife round my neck, that is my idea, you must consent to it! and the old fossil will consent.' Go, my boy, do as you like, tie your stone to yourself, marry your Pousselevent, your Coupelevent . . . —Never, monsieur! never!"

"Father!"

"Never!"

At the tone in which this "never" was pronounced, Marius lost all hope. He traversed the room with slow steps, his head bowed down, tottering, more like a man who is dying than like one who is going away. M. Gillenormand followed him with his eyes, and at the moment when the door opened and when Marius was going out, he took four steps with the senile vivacity of impetuous and self-willed old men, seized Marius by the collar, pulled him back energetically into the room, threw him into an arm-chair and said to him:

"Tell me about it."

It was that single word *father*, dropped by Marius, which had produced this revolution.

Marius looked at M. Gillenormand wildly. The mobile countenance of M. Gillenormand expressed nothing now but a rough and ineffa-

ble good-nature. The ancestor had given place to the grandfather.

"Come, let us see, speak, tell me of your love episodes, chatter, tell me all! Sapristi! how foolish these young men are!"

"My father!" resumed Marius.

The entire face of the old gentleman was lit up with an unutterable radiance.

"Yes, that is it! call me your father, and you'll see!"

There was now something so good, so gentle, so open, so paternal, in this brusquerie, that Marius, in this sudden passage from discouragement to hope, was, as it were, stunned and intoxicated. He was seated near the table, the light of the candles made the dilapidated state of dress obtrude so, that Father Gillenormand regarded it with amazement.

"Well, my father," said Marius.

"Ah! now," interrupted M. Gillenormand, "you really haven't then a sou? You are dressed like a robber."

He fumbled in a drawer and took out a purse, which he laid on the table:

"Hold, here are a hundred louis, buy yourself a hat."

"My father," continued Marius, "my good father, if you knew! I love her. You cannot imagine it, the first time I saw her was at the

Luxembourg, where she came; at the beginning I did not pay any great attention to her, and then I don't know how it happened, I fell in love with her. Oh! how wretched it has made me! At last I see her now, every day, at her own house, her father does not know it, fancy, they are going away, it is in a garden we see each other, at night, her father wishes to take her to England, and then I said to myself: 'I will go and see my grandfather and tell him about it.' I should first go mad, I should die, I should have a sickness, I should throw myself into the water. I absolutely must marry her, else I shall go mad. Now, that is the whole truth, I do not believe that I have forgotten anything. She lives in a garden where there is a railing, in the Rue Plumet. It is by the side of the Invalides."

Father Gillenormand was sitting radiantly by the side of Marius. While listening and enjoying the sound of his voice, he enjoyed at the same time a long pinch of snuff. At the word, Rue Plumet, he checked his inhalation, and let the rest of the snuff fall on his knees.

"Rue Plumet! you say Rue Plumet?—Let us see now!—Are there not some barracks down there?—Oh, yes, that's it. Your cousin, Théodule, told me about it. The lancer, the officer.—A lassie, my good friend, a lassie!—

Pardieu! yes, Rue Plumet. That is what used to be called Rue Blomet.—It all comes back to me. I have heard tell about this little girl of the railings in the Rue Plumet. In a garden. A Pamela. You haven't bad taste. They say she is tidy. Between ourselves, I believe that that ninny of a lancer has courted her a little. I do not know how far it has gone. After all, that amounts to nothing. Besides, there is no believing him. He brags. Marius! I think it very proper that a young man like you should be in love. It becomes your age. I like you better as a lover than as a Jacobin. I like you better taken by a petticoat, sapristi! by twenty petticoats, than by Monsieur Robespierre. For my part, I do myself this justice that, as regards sansculottes I have never loved any but the women. Pretty girls are pretty girls, the devil! there is no objection to that. As to this little girl, she receives you unknown to papa. That's in order. I have had some affairs of that sort myself. More than one. Do you know what a man does in such cases? he does not regard the matter with ferocity; he does not precipitate himself into the tragic; he does not conclude with marriage and with Monsieur the Mayor with his scarf. No, he is very stupidly a sharp fellow. He has good sense. Glide over it, mortals, don't marry.

Such a young man comes and finds his grandfather, who is a good fellow at bottom, and who has always some rolls of louis in an old drawer; he says to him: 'Grandfather, that's how it is.' And the grandfather says: 'That's very simple. Youth must enjoy itself, and old age be worn out. I have been young, you will be old. Go on, my boy, you will requite this to your grandson. Here are two hundred pistoles. Amuse yourself, confound it! Nothing better!' That is the way in which the matter should be arranged. He does not marry, but that is no obstacle. Do you understand me?"

Marius, petrified and incapable of uttering a word, made a sign with his head that he did not.

The old gentleman burst out laughing, winked his old eye, gave him a tap on the knee, looked at him straight in the eyes with a mysterious and radiant expression, and said, with the tenderest shrug of the shoulders:

"Stupid! make her your mistress."

Marius turned pale. He had understood nothing of all that his grandfather had been saying. This maundering about the Rue Blomet, Pamela, the barracks, the lancer, had passed before Marius like a phantasmagoria. Nothing of all this could relate to Cosette, who was a lily. The old gentleman was wan-

dering. But this divagation had concluded with a word which Marius had understood, and which was a mortal insult to Cosette. The words, *make her your mistress,* entered the heart of this chaste young man like a sword.

He rose, picked up his hat, which was on the ground, and walked to the door with an assured and firm step. There he turned, bowed profoundly before his grandfather, drew up his head again, and said:

"Five years ago you outraged my father; to-day you have outraged my wife. I ask nothing more of you, monsieur. Adieu."

Father Gillenormand, stupefied, opened his mouth, extended his arms, strove to rise, but before he was able to utter a word, the door had closed again, and Marius had disappeared.

The old man remained a few minutes motionless, and, as it were, thunderstricken, unable to speak or to breathe, as if a clinched fist was clutching his throat. At length he tore himself out of his arm-chair, ran to the door as fast as a man can run at ninety-one years of age, opened it, and cried:

"Help! help!"

His daughter appeared, then his domestics. He went on with a lamentable rattle in his throat:

"Run after him! catch him! What have

I done to him? He is mad! he is going away! Ah! my God! ah! my God! this time he will not come back any more!"

He went to the window which looked on the street, opened it with his tremulous old hands, hung more than half his body out of it, while Basque and Nicolette held him behind, and cried:

"Marius! Marius! Marius! Marius!"

But Marius could not hear him, and at this very moment was turning the corner of the Rue Saint-Louis.

The octogenarian raised his two hands to his temples two or three times with an expression of anguish, tottered back, and sank into an arm-chair, without pulse, without voice, without tears, shaking his head and moving his lips with a stupid air, having now nothing in his eyes and in his heart but a mournful and profound something which resembled night.

BOOK NINE

WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

I.

JEAN VALJEAN

That same day, toward four o'clock in the afternoon, Jean Valjean was sitting alone on the far side of one of the most solitary slopes of the Champ de Mars. Whether from prudence, whether from a desire to reflect, whether simply in consequence of one of those insensible changes of habits which introduce themselves little by little into all existences, he went out now very rarely with Cosette. He had on his workman's vest, and trousers of gray canvas, and his cap with the long visor concealed his face. He was at present calm and happy in regard to Cosette; what had startled and troubled him for awhile was dissipated; but, during the last week or two, anxieties of a fresh nature had sprung up. One day, while walking on the boulevard, he had seen Thénardier; thanks to his disguise, Thénardier had not recognized him; but after that Jean Valjean had seen him several times again, and he now felt a certainty that Thén-

ardier was prowling about the quarter. This was sufficient to make him take a serious step. Thénardier there, that was every peril at once. Moreover, Paris was not quiet; political troubles offered this inconvenience to any man who had something in his life to hide, that the police had become very unquiet and very secret, and, that in seeking to ferret out a man like Pépin or Morey, they would be very likely to discover a man like Jean Valjean. Jean Valjean had decided to quit Paris, and even France, and to go to England. He had warned Cosette. Before eight days he hoped to be off. He was sitting on the slope of the Champ de Mars, revolving in his mind all sorts of thoughts, Thénardier, the police, the journey, and the difficulty of procuring a passport.

From all these points of view he was anxious.

Lastly, an inexplicable fact, which had burst upon him, and from which he was still hot, had added to his alarm. On the morning of that very day, being the only person up in the house, and walking in the garden before Cosette's shutters were opened, he had suddenly perceived this line scratched upon the wall, probably with a nail:

16, Rue de la Verrerie.

It was quite recent, the lines were white on

the old black mortar, and a clump of nettles at the foot of the wall was powdered with fine fresh plaster. This had probably been inscribed there during the night. What was it? an address? a signal for others? a warning for him? In any case, it was evident that the garden had been violated, and that some unknown persons had penetrated into it. He recalled the strange incidents which had already alarmed the house. His mind worked upon this canvas. He was careful not to speak to Cosette about the line written on the wall, for fear of alarming her.

In the midst of these preoccupations he perceived, from a shadow which the sun threw, that some one had stopped on the crest of the slope immediately behind him. He was just going to turn, when a paper folded in four fell on his knees, as if a hand had thrown it over his head. He took the paper, unfolded it, and there read this word, written in large characters, in pencil:

REMOVE.

Jean Valjean rose hastily, but there was no longer anybody on the slope; he looked round him, and perceived a species of being larger than a child, smaller than a man, dressed in a gray blouse and trousers of dirt-colored

cotton-velvet, bestriding the parapet, and slipping down into the moat of the Champ de Mars.

Jean Valjean returned home immediately, very pensive.

II

MARIUS

Marius had left the house of M. Gillenormand desolate. He had gone in with very little hope; he had come out with an immense despair.

However, and those who have watched the beginnings of the human heart will comprehend it, the lancer, the officer, the ninny, the cousin Théodule, had left no shadow on his mind. Not the slightest. The dramatic poet might apparently hope for some complications to be produced by this revelation, made in his very teeth to the grandson by the grandfather. But what the drama would gain by it, truth would lose. Marius was at that age when a man believes nothing that is wrong; later comes the age when he believes everything. Suspicions are nothing else but wrinkles. Early youth has none. That which overwhelms Othello glides over Candide. Suspect Cosette! there are a multitude of crimes that Marius could have committed more easily.

He began to walk about the streets, the resource of those who suffer. He thought of nothing which he could remember. At two o'clock in the morning he returned to Courfeyrac's lodging, and threw himself all dressed on his mattress. It was bright sunshine when he fell asleep, with that frightful oppressive sleep which allows ideas to come and go in the brain. When he awoke he saw, standing in the room, their hats on their heads, all ready to go out and very busy, Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Feuilly, and Combeferre.

Courfeyrac said to him:

"Are you coming to the funeral of General Lamarque?"

It seemed to him that Courfeyrac was talking Chinese.

He went out some time after them. He put in his pockets the pistols which Javert had intrusted to him at the time of the adventure of February 3, and which had remained in his hands. These pistols were still loaded. It would be difficult to say what obscure thought he had in his mind in taking them.

The whole day he rambled about, without knowing where; it rained at times, but he did not perceive it; he bought for his dinner a roll for a sou at a baker's, put it in his pocket, and forgot it. It appears that he took a bath in the Seine without being conscious of it.

There are moments when a man has a furnace under his skull. Marius was in one of those moments. He hoped for nothing more; he feared for nothing more; he believed nothing more; he had reached this condition since the evening before. He awaited the evening with a feverish impatience, he had but one clear idea,—that at nine o'clock he should see Cosette. This last happiness was now his whole future; afterwards, the shadow. At intervals, while walking along the most deserted boulevards, he seemed to hear strange noises in Paris. He thrust his head out of his reverie and said: "Can it be they are fighting?"

At nightfall, at nine o'clock precisely, as he had promised Cosette, he was at the Rue Plumet. When he approached the grating he forgot everything else. It was forty-eight hours since he had seen Cosette, he was going to see her again; every other thought was effaced, and he felt now only an extraordinary and profound joy. Those minutes in which men live centuries have always this sovereign and admirable thing about them, that, at the moment when they pass they entirely fill the heart.

Marius removed the railing and sprang into the garden. Cosette was not at the place where she usually waited for him. He crossed the thicket, and went to the recess near the

steps. "She is waiting for me there," said he. Cosette was not there. He raised his eyes and saw that the shutters of the house were closed. He made the tour of the garden, the garden was deserted. Then he returned to the house, and, mad with love, intoxicated, dismayed, exasperated with grief and inquietude, like a master who returns home in an untoward hour, he rapped at the shutters. He rapped, he rapped again, at the risk of seeing the window open and the sombre face of the father appear, and demand of him: "What do you want?" This was nothing to what he now began to perceive. When he had rapped, he raised his voice, and called Cosette.—"Cosette!" cried he. "Cosette!" repeated he, imperiously. There was no answer. It was all over. There was no one in the garden; no one in the house.

Marius fixed his despairing eyes on this lugubrious house, as black, as silent, and more empty than a tomb. He gazed at the stone bench on which he had spent so many adorable hours near Cosette. Then he sat down on the garden steps, his heart full of gentleness and of resolution, he blessed his love in the depths of his thought, and said to himself that since Cosette was gone there was nothing more for him but to die.

All at once he heard a voice which seemed

to come from the street, and which cried through the trees:

"Monsieur Marius!"

He drew himself up.

"Hilloh!" said he.

"Monsieur Marius, are you there?"

"Yes."

"Monsieur Marius," continued the voice, "your friends are waiting for you at the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie."

This voice was not entirely unknown to him. It resembled the harsh and roughened voice of Eponine. Marius ran to the railing, pulled aside the movable bar, passed his head through, and saw some one, who seemed to be a young man, disappearing as he ran in the twilight.

III.

M. MABEUF

The purse of Jean Valjean had been useless to M. Mabeuf. M. Mabeuf in his miserable childlike austerity, had not accepted the gift of the stars; he had not admitted that a star could coin itself into louis d'or. He had not divined that that which fell from heaven came from Gavroche. He had carried the purse to the commissary of police of the quartier, as a lost object, placed by the finder at the disposition of claimants. The purse was lost, in fact. We need hardly say that nobody reclaimed it, and it did not help M. Mabeuf.

For the rest, M. Mabeuf had continued to descend.

The experiments upon indigo had succeeded no better at the Jardin des Plantes than in his garden of Austerlitz. The year before he owed his housekeeper her wages; now, as we have seen, he owed his landlord his rent. The mont-de-piété at the expiration of thirteen months had sold the copper-plates of his

Flora. Some tinker had made sauce-pans of them. When his copper-plates had disappeared, as he could no longer complete the unbound copies of his *Flora*, which he still possessed, he had given up at a wretched price to a second-hand bookseller plates and text as *waste-sheets*. He had now nothing left him of the labor of his whole life. He began to eat up the money produced by these copies. When he saw that this slender resource was growing exhausted, he gave up his garden, and left it waste. Before this, and long before, he had given up the two eggs and the bit of beef which he ate from time to time. He dined on bread and potatoes. He had sold his last furniture, then everything he had in duplicate, in linen, in clothes, and in coverlets, then his collection of herbs and his plates; but he still had his most precious books, among them being several of great rarity, among others *Les Quadrains Historiques de la Bible*, edition of 1560, *La Concordance des Bibles* of Pierre de Besse, *Les Marguerites de la Marguerite*, of Jean de la Haye, with a dedication to the Queen of Navarre, the work *On the Duties and Dignity of an Ambassador*, by the Sieur de Villiers-Hotman, a *Florilegium Rabbinicum*, of 1644, a *Tibullus*, of 1567, with the splendid imprint: *Venetiis, in ædibus Manutianis;* lastly a *Diogenes Laer-*

tius, printed at Lyons in 1644, and in which are found the famous variants of the manuscript 411 of the thirteenth century in the Vatican, and those of the two Venetian manuscripts 393 and 394, so fruitfully consulted by Henri Estienne, and all the passages in the Doric dialect, which are not found except in the celebrated manuscript of the twelfth century in the library of Naples. M. Mabeuf never made a fire in his room, and went to bed by daylight, in order not to burn a candle. It seemed as if he no longer had neighbors, they shunned him when he went out, he noticed it. The misery of a child interests a mother, the misery of a young man interests a young girl, the misery of an old man interests nobody. This is of all distresses the coldest. Still Father Mabeuf had not entirely lost his childlike serenity. His eye acquired some vivacity when it settled on his books, and he smiled when he thought of the Diogenes Laertius, which was a unique copy. His glass case was the only furniture which he had preserved beyond what was indispensable.

One day Mother Plutarch said to him:

"I have nothing to buy the dinner with."

What she called the dinner consisted of a loaf of bread and four or five potatoes.

"On credit?" said M. Mabeuf.

"You know well that they refuse me."

M. Mabeuf opened his bookcase, looked for a long time at all his books one after the other, as a father obliged to decimate his children would look at them before choosing, then took one up hastily, put it under his arm, and went out. He returned two hours after with nothing any longer under his arm, laid thirty sous on the table, and said:

"You will get some dinner."

From that moment Mother Plutarch saw settling on the white face of the old man a sombre veil, which was not raised again.

The next day, the next after that, every day he had to begin again, M. Mabeuf went out with a book and returned with a piece of silver. As the second-hand booksellers saw that he was forced to sell they bought from him for twenty sous books for which he had paid twenty francs, sometimes to the same booksellers. Volume by volume all his library passed away. He said at times: "I am, however, eighty years of age," as if he had some lurking hope of arriving at the end of his days before he reached the end of his books. His sadness increased. Once, however, he had a joy. He went out with a Robert Estienne, which he sold for thirty-five sous on the Quai Malaquais, and came home with an Aldus which he had bought for forty sous in the Rue des Grès. "I owe five sous," said he

quite radiantly to Mother Plutarch. That day he did not dine.

He belonged to the Society of Horticulture. His poverty was known there. The president of that society came to see him, promised him to speak about him to the minister of agriculture and commerce, and did so. "Why, how now!" exclaimed the minister. "I well believe it! An old savant! a botanist! an inoffensive man! We must do something for him!" The next day M. Mabeuf received an invitation to dine with the minister. Trembling with joy, he showed the letter to Mother Plutarch. "We are saved!" said he. On the appointed day he went to the minister's. He noticed that his ragged cravat, his large, old, square-cut coat, and his shoes varnished with egg, astonished the ushers. No one spoke to him, not even the minister. Toward ten o'clock in the evening, while still waiting for a word, he heard the wife of the minister, a beautiful lady in a low-necked dress, whom he had not dared to approach, ask: "Who can that old gentleman be?" He went home on foot, at midnight, through a driving rain. He had sold an Elzevir to pay his hackney coach in going.

Every evening, before going to bed, he had acquired the habit of reading a few pages of his Diogenes Laertius. He knew enough of Greek to enjoy the peculiarities of the text

which he possessed. He had now no other joy. Some weeks rolled by. All at once Mother Plutarch fell ill. There is one thing more sad than not to have anything wherewith to buy bread at a baker's, that is, not to have anything wherewith to buy drugs at the apothecary's. One evening the doctor had ordered a very expensive potion. And then the disease grew worse, a nurse was needed. M. Mabeuf opened his bookcase, there was nothing more there. The last volume had gone. There remained nothing but the Diogenes Laertius.

He placed the unique copy under his arm and went out, it was the 4th of June, 1832; he went to the Porte Saint-Jacques to the successor of Royol, and returned with a hundred francs. He placed the pile of five-franc pieces on the night-table of the old servant and re-entered his room without saying a word.

The next day, by dawn, he seated himself on the overturned post in his garden, and over the hedge he might have been seen the whole morning, motionless, his head bowed down, his eye vaguely fixed upon the withered flower-beds. It rained at intervals, the old man did not seem to perceive it. In the afternoon extraordinary noises broke out in Paris. They resembled musket-shots and the clamor of a multitude.

Father Mabeuf raised his head. He perceived a gardener passing by, and demanded:

"What is that?"

The gardener replied, with the spade behind his back, and with the most peaceful accent:

"It's the émeutes."

"How, émeutes?"

"Yes. They are fighting."

"What are they fighting for?"

"Ah! Dame!" said the gardener.

"In what direction?" replied M. Mabeuf.

"By the side of the arsenal."

Father Mabeuf went into his house, took his hat, mechanically sought for a book to place under his arm, found none, said, "Ah! that's true!" and went out with a bewildered look.

BOOK TEN

THE FIFTH OF JUNE, 1832

I.

THE SURFACE OF THE QUESTION

Of what is an émeute composed? Of nothing and of everything. Of an electricity little by little disengaged, of a flame suddenly leaping forth, of a force which wanders, of a breath that passes. This breath meets with heads that talk, with brains that dream, with souls that suffer, with passions that burn, with miseries that howl, and sweeps them away.

Whither?

At hazard. Across the State, across the laws, across the prosperity and the insolence of others.

Irritated convictions, embittered enthusiasms, aroused indignations, the instincts of war repressed, youthful courage exalted, generous blindnesses; curiosity, the taste for change, the thirst for the unexpected, the feeling which causes us to find pleasure in reading the bill of a new play, and the prompter's whistle that we love at the theatre; vague hatreds, rancors, disappointments, every vanity which

believes that destiny has been a bankrupt to it; straitened circumstances, empty dreams, ambitions surrounded by escarpments, whoever hopes for an escape from a downfall; lastly, at the very bottom, the mob, that mud which takes fire, such are the elements of the émeute.

Whatever is greatest and whatever is most infamous; the beings who prowl about beyond the pale of everything, awaiting an opportunity, bohemians, vagrants, loafers at street-corners, the men who sleep at night in a desert of houses with no other roof than the cold clouds of the sky, those who daily ask their bread from chance and not from work, the unknown ones of misery and nothingness, the bare arms, the bare feet, belong to the émeute.

Whoever has in his soul a secret revolt against any act of the State, of life, or of destiny, borders on the émeute, and, so soon as it appears, he commences to shiver and to feel himself uplifted by the whirlwind.

The émeute is a sort of waterspout of the social atmosphere, which suddenly takes form in certain conditions of temperature, and which, in its whirling, mounts, runs, thunders, tears up, razes, crushes, demolishes, uproots, dragging with it the grand natures and the paltry, the strong man and the feeble mind, the trunk of a tree and the blade of straw.

Woe to him whom it sweeps away, as well as to him whom it comes to smite! It breaks them one against the other.

It communicates to those whom it seizes a mysterious and extraordinary power. It fills the first comer with the force of events; it makes everything into projectiles. It makes of a stone a cannon-ball and of a street-porter a general.

If we may believe certain oracles of crafty politics, from the governmental point of view, a little of the émeute is desirable. System: the émeute strengthens those governments which it does not overthrow. It tests the army; it concentrates the bourgeoisie; it strengthens the muscles of the police; it determines the force of the social frame. It is a lesson in gymnastics; it is almost hygiene. The power feels better after an émeute, as a man is after a rubbing down.

The émeute, thirty years ago, was regarded from other points of view also.

There is for everything a theory which proclaims itself "common sense;" Philinte against Alceste; a mediation offered between the true and the false; explanation, admonition, a somewhat haughty extenuation, which, because it is composed of blame and of apology, believes itself wisdom, and is often nothing but pedantry. An entire political school,

called the "Juste milieu," or Middle-course school, has emanated from this. Between cold water and hot water there is the party of lukewarm water. This school, with its false depth, entirely superficial, which dissects effects without going back to causes, scolds from the elevation of a semi-science, the agitations of the public square.

To listen to this school: "The émeutes which complicated the achievement of 1830 deprived that great event of a part of its purity. The revolution of July had been a fine blast of the popular wind, suddenly followed by a blue sky. They brought back the cloudy sky. They compelled that revolution, in the beginning so remarkable for unanimity, to degenerate into a quarrel. In the revolution of July, as in every progress produced by jerks, there were some secret fractures; the émeute renders these noticeable. We might say: Ah! this is broken. After the revolution of July only the deliverance was felt; after the émeutes the catastrophe was felt.

"Every émeute closes the shops, depresses the funds, dismays the Stock Exchange, suspends commerce, checks business, precipitates bankruptcies; there is no more money; private fortunes are disturbed, public credit is shaken, trade is disconcerted, capital is withdrawn, labor is at a discount, fear is everywhere; re-

actions occur in every city. Hence come gulfs. It is calculated that the first day of an émeute costs France twenty millions of francs, the second forty, the third sixty. An émeute of three days costs one hundred and twenty millions, that is to say, if we only regard the financial result, is equivalent to a disaster, a shipwreck, or a lost battle which should annihilate a fleet of sixty vessels of the line.

"Without doubt, historically, émeutes had their beauty; the war of the pavements is no less grand and no less pathetic than the war of thickets; in the one there is the soul of forests, in the other the heart of cities; one has Jean Chouan, the other has Jeanne. The émeutes illuminated with red, but splendidly, all the most original outcomes of the Parisian character, generosity, devotion, stormy gayety, students proving that bravery forms a part of intelligence, the National Guard unwavering, bivouacs of shop-keepers, fortresses of gamins, contempt of death among passers-by. Schools and legions came into conflict. After all, between the combatants there was only a difference of age; they are the same race; they are the same stoical men who die at twenty years for their ideas, at forty for their families. The army, always sad in civil wars, opposed prudence to audacity. The émeutes, at the same

time that they manifested popular intrepidity, effected the education of bourgeois courage.

"That is all very well. But is all this worth the blood shed? And then add to the blood shed the future darkened, progress compromised, anxiety among the better classes, honest liberals despairing, foreign absolutism delighted at these wounds dealt to revolution by itself, the vanquished of 1830 triumphing and saying: 'We told you so!' Add Paris enlarged perhaps, but France assuredly diminished. Add, for we must tell all, the massacres which too often dishonored the victory of order, which became ferocious, over liberty which went mad. Upon the whole, émeutes have been baleful."

Thus speaks, this almost wisdom, with which the bourgeoisie, that are almost the people, contents itself so willingly.

For ourselves, we reject this word, too large, and consequently too convenient: the émeutes. Between one popular movement and another popular movement we make a distinction. We do not ask ourselves whether an émeute costs as much as a battle. In the first place, wherefore a battle? Here the question of war arises. Is war less a scourge than the émeute is a calamity? And, then, are all émeutes calamities? And what if the 14th of July did cost one hundred and twenty millions? The estab-

lishment of Philip V. in Spain cost France two thousand millions. Even were the price equal we should prefer the 14th of July. Besides, we repulse these figures, which appear to be reasons and which are only words. An émeute being conceded, we examine it in itself. In all that is said by the theoretical objection above set forth the only question is about effect, we are seeking for the cause.

We specify.

II.

THE BOTTOM OF THE QUESTION

There is the émeute, and there is the insurrection; they are two passions; the one is wrong, the other is right. In democratic states, the only ones founded in justice, it sometimes happens that the fraction usurps; then, the whole rises up, and the necessary demand for its rights again may go as far as the taking up of arms. In all the questions which result from collective sovereignty the war of the whole against the fraction is insurrection, the attack of the fraction on the whole is an émeute; according as the Tuileries contain the king or contain the Convention they are justly or unjustly attacked. The same cannon pointed against the mob are wrong on the 10th of August, and right on the 14th Vendémiaire. Similar in appearance, different at bottom; the Swiss defend the false, Bonaparte defends the true. That which universal suffrage has done in its liberty and in its sovereignty cannot be undone by the street. It is

the same in matters of pure civilization; the instinct of the masses, yesterday clear-sighted, to-morrow may be perturbed. The same fury is legitimate against Terray and absurd against Turgot. The breaking of machines, the pillaging of store-houses, tearing up of rails, the demolition of docks, the false courses of the multitudes, the denials of popular justice to progress, Ramus assassinated by the students, Rousseau driven out of Switzerland by stones, is the émeute. Israel against Moses, Athens against Phocion, Rome against Scipio, is the émeute; Paris against the Bastille is insurrection. The soldiers against Alexander, the sailors against Christopher Columbus, this is the same revolt; an impious revolt; wherefore? Because Alexander does for Asia with the sword what Christopher Columbus does for America with the compass; Alexander, like Columbus, finds a world. These gifts of a world to civilization are such accessions of light, that all resistance, in such a case, is culpable. Sometimes the people warps fidelity to itself. The mob is traitorous to the people. Is there, for example, anything more strange than that long and bloody protest of the contraband saltmakers, a legitimate chronic revolt, which, at the decisive moment, on the day of salvation, at the hour of the popular victory, espouses the throne, turns into chou-

annerie, and from an insurrection against becomes an émeute for! Gloomy masterpieces of ignorance! The contraband saltmakers escape the royal gallows, and, with a bit of rope round their necks, mount the white cockade. "Death to the salt taxes!" brings into the world, "Long live the king!" The killers of St. Bartholomew, the murderers of September, the massacrers of Avignon, the assassins of Coligny, the assassins of Madame de Lamballe, the assassins of Brune, Miquelets, Verdets, Cadenettes, Companions of Jehu, Chevaliers du Brassard, such is émeute. The Vendée is a great Catholic émeute. The sound of right in motion recognizes itself, it does not always come from the trembling of the overthrown masses; there are foolish furies, there are cracked bells; all the tocsins do not give the sound of bronze. The commotion of passions and of ignorances is different from the shock of progress. Rise, if you will, but to grow. Show me to what side you are going. There is no insurrection but forward. Every other uprising is bad. Every violent step backward is an émeute; to retreat is an act of violence against the human race. Insurrection is the outburst of the fury of truth; the paving-stones which insurrection tears up emit the spark of right. These paving-stones only leave to the émeute their mud. Danton

against Louis XVI. is insurrection; Hébert against Danton is an émeute.

Hence it comes, if insurrection, in given cases may be, as Lafayette said, the most sacred of duties, the émeute may be the most deadly of crimes.

There is also some difference in the intensity of caloric; insurrection is often a volcano, an émeute is often a fire of straw.

The revolt, as we have said, is sometimes on the part of power. Polignac is a rioter; Camille Desmoulins is a governor.

Sometimes insurrection is resurrection.

The solution of everything by universal suffrage being a fact absolutely modern, and all history anterior to that fact being, for four thousand years, filled with violated right and the suffering of the peoples, each epoch of history brings with it that protest which is possible to it. Under the Cæsars there was no insurrection, but there was Juvenal.

The *facit indignatio* replaces the Gracchi.

Under the Cæsars there is the Exile of Syène; there is also the man of the *Annales*.

We do not speak of the sublime Exile of Patmos, who also overwhelms the real world with a protest in the name of the ideal world, makes of the vision an enormous satire and casts upon Rome-Nineveh, upon Rome-Babylon, upon

Rome-Sodom, the flaming reverberation of the Apocalypse.

John upon his rock is the sphinx upon its pedestal; we cannot understand him; he is a Jew, and it is in Hebrew; but the man who wrote the *Annales* is a Latin; let us rather say, he is a Roman.

As the Neros reign after a black manner, they ought to be painted accordingly. Work produced by the graver only would be pale; so a concentrated biting prose must be poured into the lines.

Despots are of some service to thinkers. Chained language is terrible language. The writer doubles and triples his style when silence is imposed by a master on the people. There issues from this silence a certain mysterious plenitude which filters and congeals itself into bronze in the thoughts. Compression in history produces conciseness in the historian. The granitic solidity of certain celebrated prose is nothing else than a pressure produced by the tyrant.

Tyranny constrains the writer into certain contractions of diameter, which are accessions of force. The Ciceronian period, hardly sufficient upon Verres, would be blunted upon Caligula. Less roundness in the sentence, more intensity in the blow. Tacitus thinks with his arm drawn back.

The honesty of a great heart, condensed into justice and truth, strikes like a thunderbolt.

Be it said, in passing, it is to be remarked that Tacitus is not historically superimposed on Cæsar. The Tiberii were reserved for him. Cæsar and Tacitus are two successive phenomena, whose meeting seems to be mysteriously avoided by Him Who, putting the centuries on the stage, regulates the entrances and exits. Cæsar is great, Tacitus is great; God spares these two greatnesses by not dashing them the one against the other. The judge, striking Cæsar, might strike too hard, and be unjust. God did not so will. The great wars of Africa and of Spain, the destruction of the Cilician pirates, civilization introduced into Gaul, into Britain, into Germany, all this glory covers the Rubicon. There is in this a species of delicacy on the part of divine justice, hesitating to let loose on the illustrious usurper the formidable historian, granting to Cæsar the forgiveness of Tacitus and according extenuating circumstances to genius.

Assuredly, despotism remains despotism, even under the despot of genius. There is corruption under illustrious tyrants, but the moral pestilence is more hideous still under infamous tyrants. In these reigns nothing veils the shame; and the makers of examples, Tacitus as well as Juvenal, belabor more use-

fully, in presence of the human race, this ignominy without excuse.

Rome smells worse under Vitellius than under Sylla. Under Claudius and under Domitian there is a deformity of baseness corresponding to the ugliness of the tyrant. The foulness of the slaves is a direct product of the despots; a miasma exhales from these crouching consciences in which is reflected the master; the public powers are unclean; hearts are small, consciences are sunken, souls are bugs; this is so under Caracalla, this is so under Commodus, this is so under Heliogabalus, while there only issues from the Roman senate under Cæsar the dung-like odor peculiar to the nests of eagles.

Hence the appearance, in apparent tardiness, of the Tacituses and of the Juvenals; it is at the hour of evidence that the demonstrator appears.

But Juvenal and Tacitus, like Isaiah in biblical times, like Dante in the middle ages, are the men; the émeute and the insurrection are the multitude, which sometimes is wrong, sometimes is right.

In the most general cases the émeute issues from a material fact; the insurrection is always a moral phenomenon. The émeute is Masaniello; the insurrection is Spartacus. Insurrection is related to the mind, the émeute to

the stomach. Gaster is irritated; but Gaster, certainly, is not always wrong. In questions of famine, the émeute, the Buzançais one, for example, has a true point of departure, pathetic and just. Yet it remains an émeute. Why? because, though having reason at the bottom, it was wrong in form. Ferocious, though having right, violent though strong, it struck at hazard; it marched like a blind elephant, crushing as it went; it has left behind it the corpses of old men, of women, and of children; and has shed, without knowing why, the blood of the inoffensive and of the innocent. To feed the people is a good end, to massacre is a bad means.

All armed protests, even the most legitimate, even the 10th of August, even the 14th of July, set out with the same trouble. Before right is disengaged there are tumult and scum. At the commencement an insurrection is an émeute, in the same way as the river is a torrent. Ordinarily it pours itself into that ocean: Revolution. Sometimes, however, coming from those high mountains which dominate the moral horizon, justice, wisdom, reason, right, made of the purest snow of the ideal, after a long fall from rock to rock, after having reflected the sky in its transparency, and having been swollen by a hundred affluents in the majestic course of triumph, the

insurrection suddenly loses itself in some bourgeois quagmire, as the Rhine does in a marsh.

All this is of the past, and the future is different. Universal suffrage has this admirable thing about it, that it dissolves émeute in its principle, and, by giving a vote to insurrection, it takes away its arms. The disappearance of war, of war of the streets as well as the wars of the frontiers, such is inevitable progress. Whatever to-day may be, peace is the To-morrow.

However, concerning insurrection, émeute, in whatever way the first differs from the second, the bourgeois, properly so called, makes but little of their slight distinctions. To him all is sedition, rebellion pure and simple, revolt of the dog against the master, an attempt to bite, which must be punished with the chain and the kennel, a barking, a yelping; until the day when the head of the dog, suddenly enlarged, stands out vaguely in the shadow with the face of a lion.

Then the bourgeois cries: "Long live the people!"

This explanation given, what, in history, is the movement of June, 1832? is it an émeute? is it an insurrection?

It is an insurrection.

It may happen, in this representation of a formidable event we may sometimes use the

word "émeute," but only to qualify the facts on the surface, yet maintaining always the distinction between the form émeute and the basis insurrection.

This movement of 1832 had, in its rapid explosion and in its lugubrious extinction, so much grandeur that even those who only see in it an émeute do not speak of it without respect. To them, it is like a remnant of 1830. "Excited imaginations," say they, "cannot be calmed in a day." A revolution is not cut perpendicular. It has always necessarily a few undulations before it returns to a state of peace, as a mountain in redescending to the plain. There are no Alps without their Jura, nor Pyrenees without their Asturias.

This pathetic crisis of contemporary history, which the memory of the Parisians calls *the epoch of émeutes*, is assuredly a characteristic hour among the stormy hours of this century.

A last word before re-entering on our story.

The facts which we are going to recount belong to that dramatic and living reality which history sometimes neglects through want of time and space. In them, however, we insist, in them is the life, the palpitation, the human quivering. Small details, we believe we have said, are, so to speak, the foliage of great events, and are lost in the distance of history. The epoch called that *of émeutes*

abounds in details of this kind. The judicial inquiries, for other than historic reasons, have not revealed everything, nor perhaps entirely dived into it. We are, therefore, going to bring to light, among the peculiarities known and published, some things which are not known, some facts over which have passed the forgetfulness of some, the death of others. Most of the actors in these gigantic scenes have disappeared; from the morrow they were silent; but of what we relate, we can say: "we saw these things." We will change a few names, for history recounts and does not denounce, but we will paint true things. Under the conditions of the book we are writing, we only show one side and one episode, assuredly the least known, of the days of the 5th and 6th of June, 1832; but we will do so in such a way that the reader will be enabled to catch a glimpse, under the dark veil which we are going to lift, of the real countenance of this frightful public adventure.

III.

A FUNERAL: OPPORTUNITY FOR A RE-BIRTH

In the spring of 1832, although for three months the cholera had chilled minds and cast over their agitation I know not what mournful calm, Paris had been for a long time ready for a commotion. As we have said, the great city resembles a piece of artillery; when it is loaded, it needs only that one spark should fall, the gun goes off. In June, 1832, the spark was the death of General Lamarque.

Lamarque was a man of renown and of action. He had had successively, under the Empire and under the Restoration, the two braveries necessary to the two epochs, the bravery of the battle-field and the bravery of the tribune. He was eloquent as he had been valiant; men felt a sword in his words. Like Foy, his predecessor, after having upheld command, he upheld liberty. He sat between the Left and the extreme Left, loved by the people because he accepted the chances of the future, loved by the mob because he had served the emperor

well. He was, with Counts Gérard and Drouet, one of the marshals *in petto* of Napoleon. The treaties of 1815 affected him like a personal insult. He hated Wellington with a direct hatred, which pleased the multitude; and for seventeen years, hardly noticing intermediate events, he had majestically preserved his grief for Waterloo. In his death agony, at his last hour, he had pressed against his breast a sword which the officers of the Hundred Days had presented to him. Napoleon had died uttering the word *army*, Lamarque pronouncing the word *country*.

His death, which was expected, was dreaded by the people as a loss and by the government as an opportunity. This death was a mourning. Like everything which is bitter, mourning might turn into revolt. This is what happened.

The eve and the morning of the 5th of June, the day fixed for the funeral of Lamarque, the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, which the procession would touch, assumed a formidable aspect. That tumultuous network of streets was filled with rumors. People armed themselves as they could. Some carpenters carried off the bench-hooks from their shop "to break in doors with." One of them made a dagger of a stocking-weaver's hook, by breaking off the hook and sharpening the

stump. Another in his fever "to attack" slept for three nights all dressed. A carpenter named Lombier met a comrade who asked him, "Where are you going?"—"Ah, well! I have no arms."—"And then?"—"I am going to my workyard to fetch my compasses."—"What to do?"—"I don't know," said Lombier. One named Jacqueline, a man of business, hailed every workman who passed by: "Come, you!"—He paid ten sous for wine, and said:—"Have you any work?"—"No."—"Go to Filspierre's, between the Barrière Montreuil and the Barrière Charonne, you will find work." They found at Filspierre's cartridges and arms. Certain known chiefs *did the post*, that is to say, ran from one house to another to assemble their people. At Barthélemy's, near the Barrière du Trone, at Capel's, at the Petit-Chapeau, the drinkers accosted each other with a serious air. They were heard to say: "Where is your pistol?" "Under my blouse, and yours?" "Under my shirt." In the Rue Traversière, in front of the Roland workshop, and in the Cour de la Maison-Brûlée, before the workshop of Bernier the tool-maker, groups were whispering. There was remarked, among the most ardent, a certain Mavot, who never worked more than one week at a shop, the masters sending him away, "because they were obliged to dispute with

him every day." Mavot was killed the next day on the barricade of the Rue Ménilmontant. Pretot, who was also destined to die in the struggle, seconded Mavot, and to this question: "What is your object?" answered: —*Insurrection.* Workmen assembled at the corner of the Rue de Bercy, awaiting a man named Lemarin, revolutionary agent for the Faubourg Saint-Marceau. Watch-words were exchanged almost publicly.

On the 5th of June, then, a day of mingled rain and sunshine, the funeral procession of General Lamarque traversed Paris with official military pomp, somewhat increased by way of precaution. Two battalions, with drums muffled, muskets reversed, ten thousand National Guards with sabres at their side, the batteries of the artillery of the National Guard, escorted the coffin. The hearse was drawn by young men. The officers of the Invalides followed immediately, bearing branches of laurel. Then came an innumerable multitude, agitated, strange, the sectionaries of the Friends of the People, the Law School, the School of Medicine, refugees of all nations, Spanish, Italian, German, Polish flags, horizontal tri-colored flags, every banner possible, children waving green branches, stone-cutters and carpenters, who were on a strike at that very moment, printers, recognizable by their paper caps,

marching two and two, three and three, uttering cries, nearly all brandishing clubs, a few sabres, without order, and yet with one soul, now a crowd, now a column. Some platoons chose chiefs; and a man armed with a pair of pistols, perfectly visible, seemed to be passing others in review, files straggled by before him. On the sidewalks of the boulevards, in the branches of the trees, on the balconies, at the windows, on the roofs, heads swarmed, men, women, children; their eyes were full of anxiety. An armed mob was passing by, a terrified mob was looking on.

On its side the government was observing. It was observing with its hand on the hilt of the sword. One might have seen, all ready to march, with full cartridge-boxes, guns and musquetoons loaded, in the Place Louis XV., four squadrons of carbineers, in saddle and their trumpeters at their head, in the Pays Latin and at the Jardin des Plantes, the municipal guard, echelonned from street to street, at the Halle-aux-Vins a squadron of dragoons, at the Grève one-half of the Twelfth Light Infantry, the other half at the Bastille, the Sixth Dragoons at the Célestins, the court of the Louvre filled with artillery. The rest of the troops were confined to barracks, without counting the regiments in the environs of Paris. The alarmed authorities held suspended

over the menacing multitude twenty-four thousand soldiers in the city and thirty thousand in the suburbs.

Divers rumors circulated in the procession. Some talked of legitimist intrigues; some spoke of the Duc de Reichstadt, whom God was marking for death at the very minute when the mob was designating him for the empire. A personage who was never discovered announced that at the appointed hour two overseers who had been won over, would open to the people the gates of a manufactory of arms. That which was dominating on the uncovered foreheads of most of the persons present was enthusiasm blended with extreme dejection. There could be seen, too, here and there, in this multitude, a prey to so many violent, but noble emotions, some genuine countenances of malefactors, and ignoble lips that said: "Let us pillage!" There are certain agitations which stir up the bottom of the marsh and bring to the surface of the water clouds of mud. A phenomenon to which "well-constituted" police are not strangers.

The procession made its way with feverish slowness from the house of death along the boulevards as far as the Bastille. It rained from time to time; the rain had no effect on this crowd. Several incidents, the coffin carried round the Vendôme column, stones thrown

at the Duc de Fitz-James, who was noticed on a balcony with his hat on his head, the Gallic cock torn from a popular flag and dragged in the mud, a policeman wounded by a sword-thrust at the Porte Saint-Martin, an officer of the Twelfth Light Infantry saying aloud: "I am a republican," the Polytechnic school arriving unexpectedly, after breaking out against orders, the cries: "Long live the Polytechnic school!" "Long live the republic!" marked the progress of the procession. At the Bastille, long and formidable files of the inquisitive who came down from the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, effected their junction with the procession, and a certain terrible ebullition began to upheave the mob.

One man was heard saying to another: "You see that fellow with the red beard, it is he who will say when we must fire." It would seem that this red beard reappeared later with the same functions in another èmeute, the Quénisset affair.

The hearse passed the Bastille, followed the canal, crossed the little bridge, and reached the esplanade of the bridge of Austerlitz. There it halted. At this moment a bird's-eye view of the crowd would have offered the appearance of a comet, whose head was on the esplanade and whose tail was spread over the Quai Bourdon, covered the Bastille, and

prolonged itself along the boulevard as far as the Porte Saint-Martin. A circle was formed round the hearse. The vast crowd was hushed. Lafayette spoke and bade adieu to Lamarque. It was a touching and august moment, all heads were uncovered, all hearts throbbed. All at once a man on horseback, dressed in black, appeared in the middle of the group with a red flag, others say with a pike surmounted by a red cap. Lafayette turned away his head. Excelmans left the procession.

This red flag aroused a storm and disappeared in it. From the Boulevard Bourdon to the bridge of Austerlitz one of those clamors which resemble billows stirred up the multitude. Two prodigious cries arose: —*Lamarque to the Pantheon!* — *Lafayette to the Hôtel de Ville!*—Some young men, amid the acclamations of the crowd, harnessed themselves and began to drag Lamarque in the hearse over the bridge of Austerlitz, and Lafayette in a fiacre along the Quai Morland.

In the crowd that surrounded and cheered Lafayette people noticed and pointed out a German named Ludwig Snyder, since dead, a centenarian, who had also been in the war of 1776, and who had fought at Trenton under Washington, and under Lafayette at Brandywine.

Meanwhile, on the left bank, the Municipal

cavalry was in motion and came to stop the passage of the bridge, on the right bank the dragoons came out of the Célestins and deployed along the Quai Morland. The people who were drawing Lafayette suddenly perceived them at the corner of the quay, and cried: "The dragoons!" The dragoons were advancing at a walk, in silence, their pistols in their holsters, their sabres in their sheaths, their musquetoons slung, with an air of gloomy expectation.

At two hundred paces from the little bridge they halted. The fiacre in which Lafayette was made its way up to them, they opened their ranks, let it pass, and closed up behind it. At this moment the dragoons and the crowd came in touch. The women fled in terror.

What took place in that fatal minute? no one could say. It is the dark moment when two clouds mingle. Some relate that a bugle-call sounding the charge was heard on the side of the Arsenal, others that a dagger-thrust was given by a child to a dragoon. The fact is, that three shots were suddenly fired, the first killed the chief of the squadron, Cholet, the second killed an old deaf woman who was closing her window in the Rue Contrescarpe, the third singed the epaulette of an officer; a woman cried: "They are beginning too

soon!" and all at once there was seen from the side opposite to the Quai Morland a squadron of dragoons which had remained in barracks turning out on the gallop, with drawn sabres, by the Rue Bassompierre and the Boulevard Bourdon, and sweeping all before them.

At such a moment all is said, the tempest is unchained, it rains stones, the fusillade bursts forth, many rush down the bank and cross the small arm of the Seine, now filled up; the timber-yards on the isle Louviers, that vast ready-made citadel, bristle with combatants; some tear up stakes, pistols are fired, a barricade is rough-hewn, the young men, driven back, pass over the bridge of Austerlitz with the hearse at the double, and charge the municipal guard, the carbineers gallop up, the dragoons sabre, the crowd disperses in every direction, a rumor of war flies to the four corners of Paris, men cry: "To arms!" they run, they tumble, they fly, they resist. Passion spreads the émeute as the wind spreads the fire.

IV.

THE EBULLITIONS OF FORMER TIMES

Nothing is more extraordinary than the first swarming of an émeute. Everything bursts out everywhere at once. Was it foreseen? yes. Was it prepared? no. Where does it issue from? from the pavements. Where does it fall from? the clouds. Here the insurrection has the character of a plot; there of an improvisation. The first-comer takes possession of a current of the mob and leads it whither he pleases. A beginning full of horror, with which a sort of formidable gayety is mingled. At first there are clamors, the shops are closed, the displays of the merchants disappear; then some isolated shots; people fly; butts of muskets strike against portes-cochères; servant-girls may be heard laughing in the yards of the houses and saying; "There's going to be a row!"

A quarter of an hour had not elapsed, and here is what had taken place almost at the same time, at twenty different points of Paris.

In the Rue Sainte-Croix-de-la-Bretonnerie, some twenty young men, with beards and long hair, entered a smoking-room and came out a moment after, bearing a horizontal tri-color flag covered with crape, and having at their head three armed men, one with a sabre, another with a gun, the third with a pike.

In the Rue des Nonaindières, a well-dressed bourgeois, who had a large stomach, a sonorous voice, a bald head, a lofty forehead, a black beard, and one of those rough mustaches which cannot be smoothed down, offered cartridges publicly to the passers-by.

In the Rue Saint-Pierre-Montmartre, some men with bare arms paraded a black flag, on which could be read these words, in white letters: *Republic or Death.* In the Rue des Jeûneurs, the Rue du Cadran, the Rue Montorgueil, the Rue Mandar, appeared groups waving flags, on which could be distinguished in letters of gold, the word *section* with a number. One of these flags was red and blue, with an imperceptible white parting line.

There were rifled a manufactory of arms, on the Boulevard Saint-Martin, and three armorer's shops, the first in the Rue Beaubourg, the second in the Rue Michel-le-Comte, the other in the Rue du Temple. In a few minutes the thousand hands of the mob seized and carried off two hundred and thirty

guns, nearly all double-barreled, sixty-four sabres, eighty-three pistols. In order to arm more persons, one took the musket, another the bayonet.

Opposite the Quai de la Grève, some young men armed with muskets, installed themselves with the women to fire. One of them had a musket with a match-lock. They rang the bell, went in and set to making cartridges. One of these women has stated: "I did not know what cartridges were, it was my husband who told me."

A riotous mob broke into a curiosity-shop on the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, and took from it yataghans and Turkish arms.

The corpse of a mason killed by a gunshot lay in the Rue de la Perle.

And then, right bank, left bank, on the quays, on the boulevards, in the Quartier Latin, in the Quartier of the markets, men panting for breath, workmen, students, sectionaries, read proclamations, cried: "To arms!" broke the street-lamps, unharnessed vehicles, tore up the pavements, broke in the doors of the houses, uprooted the trees, ransacked the cellars, rolled up casks, heaped up paving-stones, pebbles, furniture, planks, formed the barricades.

They forced the bourgeois to help them. They went into the houses of the wives, com-

pelled them to surrender the sabre and the musket of their absent husbands, and then wrote with Spanish whiting on the door: "The arms are delivered up." Some signed "with their own names" receipts for musket and sabre, and said: "Send for them to-morrow at the Mairie." They disarmed in the streets isolated sentries and the National Guards proceeding to their municipality. They tore off the epaulettes of the officers. In the Rue du Cimitière-Saint-Nicolas, an officer of the National Guard, pursued by a troop armed with clubs and foils, found refuge with great difficulty in a house, which he was only able to leave at night and disguised.

In the Quartier Saint-Jacques, the students came in swarms from their houses and went up the Rue Saint-Hyacinthe to the Café du Progrès, or down to the Café des Sept-Billiards, in the Rue des Mathurins. There, before the doors, some young men standing upon some posts distributed arms. They pillaged the timber-yard in the Rue Transnonain to make barricades. Only at one spot the inhabitants resisted, at the corner of the Rues Sainte-Avoye and Simon-le-Franc, where they themselves destroyed the barricade. At one single point the insurgents gave way; they abandoned a barricade commenced in the Rue du Temple, after having fired at a detachment of the National Guard.

and fled along the Rue de la Corderie. The detachment picked up in the barricade a red flag, a packet of cartridges, and three hundred pistol-balls. The National Guards tore up the flag, and carried off the shreds on the point of their bayonets.

All this which we are here describing slowly and successively was going on at once at all points of the city, in the midst of a vast tumult, like a multitude of lightning flashes in a single peal of thunder.

In less than an hour, twenty-seven barricades rose from the ground in the single Quartier of the markets. In the centre was that famous house No. 50, which was the fortress of Jeanne and of her hundred and six companions, and which, flanked on one side by a barricade at Saint-Merry, and on the other by a barricade in the Rue Maubuée, commanded three streets, the Rue des Arcis, the Rue Saint-Martin and the Rue Aubry-le-Boucher, on which it fronted. Two barricades, square, ran back, the one from the Rue Montorgueil to the Grande-Truanderie, the other from the Rue Geoffroy-Langevin to the Rue Sainte-Avoye. Without counting innumerable barricades in twenty other Quartiers of Paris, in the Marais, at the Montagne Sainte-Geneviève; one, in the Rue Ménilmontant, where could be seen a porte-cochère torn from its hinges; another near the little

bridge of the Hôtel-Dieu, made of an écossaise unhitched and overturned, within three hundred paces of the prefecture of police.

At the barricade in the Rue des Ménétriers, a well-dressed man distributed money to the laborers. At the barricade in the Rue Greneta a horseman appeared and handed to him who seemed to be the chief of the barricade a roll, which had the appearance of a roll of money. "Here," said he, "is to pay the expenses, the wine, et cætera." A young man of a light complexion, without a cravat, went from one barricade to another, carrying the passwords. Another, with drawn sabre, a blue police cap on his head, posted some sentinels. In the interior, within the barricades, the wine-shops and porters' lodges were converted into guard-rooms. Moreover, the émeute was conducted in accordance with the most skilful military tactics. The narrow, uneven, sinuous streets, full of angles and of turnings, were admirably chosen; the environs of the markets, in particular, a network of streets more intricate than a forest. The society of the Friends of the People had, it was said, taken the direction of the insurrection in the Quartier Sainte-Avoye. A man killed in the Rue du Ponceau, who was searched, had upon him a plan of Paris.

What had really assumed the direction of

the émeute, was a sort of unknown impetuosity that was in the air. The insurrection, abruptly, had built the barricades with one hand, and with the other had seized nearly all the posts of the garrison. In less than three hours, like a train of powder which takes fire, the insurgents had invaded and occupied on the right bank, the Arsenal, the Mairie of the Place Royale, all the Marais, the Popincourt arms factory, the Galiote, the Château-d'Eau, all the streets near the markets; on the left bank, the barracks of the Vétérans, Sainte-Pélagie, the Place Maubert, the powder manufactory of the Deux-Moulins, all the Barrières. At five o'clock in the evening they were masters of the Bastille, of the Lingerie, of the Blancs-Manteaux; their scouts touched the Place des Victoires and menaced the Bank, the barracks of the Petits-Pères, the Post-office. One-third of Paris was in the hands of the émeute.

On all points the struggle had engaged on a gigantic scale; and, from the disarmings, the domiciliary visits, from the gunsmiths' shops hastily invaded, it resulted here that the combat which had commenced by throwing stones was continued by throwing balls.

About six o'clock in the evening the Passage du Saumon became a field of battle. The émeute was at one end, the troops at the end

opposite. They fired from one grating to the other. An observer, a dreamer, the author of this book, who had gone to have a near look at the volcano, found himself in the passage caught between two fires. He had nothing to protect him from the bullets but the projecting semi-columns which separate the shops; he was nearly half an hour in this delicate situation.

Meanwhile, the drums beat to arms, the National Guards hurriedly dressed and armed themselves, the legions issued from the mairies, the regiments issued from the barracks. Opposite the Passage de l'Ancre, a drummer received a thrust from a dagger. Another, in the Rue du Cygne, was assailed by some thirty young men, who ripped up his drum and took from him his sabre. Another was killed in the Rue Grenier-Saint-Lazare. In the Rue Michel-le-Comte, three officers fell dead one after the other. Several Municipal Guards, wounded in the Rue des Lombards, turned back.

In front of the Cour-Batave, a detachment of National Guards found a red flag, bearing this inscription: *Republican Revolution, No. 127.* Was it a revolution, in fact?

The insurrection had made the centre of Paris a sort of inextricable citadel, tortuous, colossal.

There was the focus, there was evidently the question. All the rest was merely skirmishing. That which proved that all would be decided there was, that they were not fighting there yet.

In some regiments, the soldiers were uncertain, which added to the frightful obscurity of the crisis. They remembered the popular ovation which, in July, 1830, greeted the neutrality of the Fifty-third of the Line. Two intrepid men, who had been proved in the great wars, Marshal de Lobau and General Bugeaud, commanded, Bugeaud under Lobau. Enormous patrols, composed of battalions of the line surrounded by entire companies of the National Guard, and preceded by a commissary of the police in his scarf, went to reconnoitre the insurgent streets. On their side, the insurgents posted scouts at the corners of the streets, and audaciously sent out patrols beyond the barricades. They kept watch on both sides. The government, with an army in its hand, hesitated; night was coming on, and the tocsin of Saint-Merry was beginning to be heard. The Minister of War at that time, General Soult, who had seen Austerlitz, looked at all this with a sombre air.

These old sailors, habituated to correct manœuvres, and having no other resource

and no other guide but tactics, that compass of battles, are all out of their latitude in the presence of that immense foam which is called the public anger. The wind of revolutions is not tractable.

The National Guards of the suburbs ran up in haste and in disorder. A battalion of the Twelfth Light Infantry came at the double from Saint-Denis, the Fourteenth of the Line arrived from Courbevoie, the batteries of the military school had taken up position at the Carrousel; guns were brought in from Vincennes.

Solitude reigned at the Tuileries, Louis-Philippe was full of serenity.

V.

ORIGINALITY OF PARIS

Within two years, as we have said, Paris had seen more than one insurrection. Outside of the insurgent districts, nothing is ordinarily more strangely calm than the physiognomy of Paris during an émeute. Paris very quickly accustoms itself to everything,—it is only an émeute,—and Paris has so much to do that it does not put itself out of the way for so slight a thing. These colossal cities alone can offer such spectacles. These immense enclosures alone can contain at the same time civil war and an indescribably strange tranquility. Usually, when the insurrection commences, when the drum, the beating to arms, the assembly are heard, the shopkeeper confines himself to saying:

"It seems there is some fighting in the Rue Saint-Martin."

Or:

"Faubourg Saint-Antoine."

Often he adds, with indifference:

"Somewhere over that way."

Later, when he distinguishes the heart-rending and lugubrious uproar of the musketry and platoon firing, the shopkeeper says:

"It is getting hot! Ah, ha! it's getting hot!"

A moment later, if the émeute approaches and spreads, he precipitately closes his shop and rapidly puts on his uniform, that is to say, places his merchandise in safety, and risks his person.

There is firing at street corners, in a passage, in a blind alley; barricades are taken, lost, and retaken; blood flows, the grapeshot riddle the fronts of the houses, bullets kill people in their beds, corpses encumber the pavement. A few streets off you hear the click of the billiard balls in the cafés.

The theatres open their doors and play vaudevilles; the inquisitive talk and laugh two steps from these streets full of war. Hackney coaches roll along; their fares are going to dine in town. Sometimes in the very quartier where the fighting is. In 1831 a fusillade was interrupted in order to let a wedding party pass.

During the insurrection of May 12, 1839, in the Rue Saint-Martin, a little old infirm man, dragging a hand-truck surmounted by a tricolor rag, in which there were decanters filled with some liquid, came and went from the barricade to the troops, and from the

troops to the barricade, impartially offering glasses of cocoa,—now to the government, now to anarchy.

Nothing is more strange; and this is the peculiar character of the émeutes of Paris which is not found in any other capital. Two things are required for it, the greatness of Paris and its gayety. It requires the city of Voltaire and of Napoleon.

This time, however, in the rising to arms of June 5, 1832, the great city felt something which was perhaps stronger than herself. She was afraid. You saw everywhere, in the quartiers the most remote and the most "disinterested," doors, windows, and shutters closed in broad day. The courageous armed, the poltroons hid themselves. Passers-by, careless and busy, disappeared. Many streets were as empty as at four o'clock in the morning. Alarming details were hawked about, fatal news was spread. That *they* were masters of the bank; that at the cloisters of Saint-Merry alone there were six hundred intrenched behind loopholes in the church; that the Line was not sure; that Armand Carrel had been to see Marshal Clausel, and that the marshal had said to him: "Have one regiment in the first place;" that Lafayette was ill, but that he had said to them notwithstanding: "I am with you. I will follow you where-

ever there is room for a chair;" that people must be on their guard; that at night there would be people who would pillage isolated houses in the deserted corners of Paris (in this could be recognized the imagination of the police, that Anne Radcliffe blended with the government); that a battery had been established in the Rue Aubry-le-Boucher; that Lobau and Bugeaud were consulting together, and that at midnight, or at daybreak at the latest, four columns would march at once upon the centre of the émeute, the first coming from the Bastille, the second from the Porte Saint-Martin, the third from the Grève, the fourth from the markets; that, perhaps too, the troops would evacuate Paris, and retire to the Champ de Mars; that no one knew what would happen, but that this time certainly it was serious. They were concerned too at the hesitation of Marshal Soult. "Why doesn't he attack at once?" It is certain that he was profoundly absorbed. The old lion seemed to scent in this shadow an unknown monster.

Evening came, the theatres were not opened; the patrols went their rounds with an irritated air; passers-by were searched; suspects were arrested. There were at nine o'clock more than eight hundred persons arrested; the prefecture of police was crowded, the Conciergerie crowded, La Force crowded. At the

Conciergerie, in particular, the long vault which is named the Rue de Paris, was strewn with trusses of straw, on which lay a pile of prisoners, whom the man of Lyons, Lagrange, harangued valiantly. All this straw, stirred by all these men, produced the sound of a shower. Elsewhere the prisoners slept in the open air on lawns, piled one upon another. Anxiety everywhere, and a certain trembling, little habitual to Paris.

People barricaded themselves in their houses; wives and mothers were disquieted; nothing else but this was heard: "Ah, my God, he has not come back!" There was heard in the distance only the rare rolling of a few vehicles. People listened on the steps of their doors to the rumors, the cries, the tumults, the dull and indistinct sounds, things of which they said: "That is the cavalry," or: "Those are the powder-carts galloping down," the bugles, the drums, the fusillade, and above all the lamentable tocsin of Saint-Merry. They waited for the first cannon-shot. Some men rose up at the corners of the streets and disappeared, after crying: "Return to your homes!" And they hastened to bolt their doors. Some said: "How will it all end?" From moment to moment, as the night fell, Paris seemed to be more lugubriously colored by the formidable flashes of the émeute.

BOOK ELEVEN

THE ATOM FRATERNIZES WITH THE HURRICANE

I.

SOME INSIGHT INTO THE ORIGIN OF THE POETRY OF GAVROCHE. INFLUENCE OF AN ACADEMICIAN ON THAT POETRY

At the moment when the insurrection, starting up, through the collision between the people and the troops in front of the Arsenal, produced a retrograde movement in the multitude that followed the hearse, and which, throughout the whole length of the boulevards, pressed, so to speak, upon the head of the procession, there was a frightful reflux. The rout broke, the ranks were broken, all ran, separated, slipped away, some with cries of attack, others with the pallor of flight. The great stream which covered the boulevards divided in the twinkling of an eye, overflowed on the right and on the left, and spread in torrents over two hundred streets at once with the rush of a burst mill-dam. At this moment a ragged lad who was coming down the Rue Ménilmontant, holding in his hand a branch

of laburnum in bloom, which he had picked on the heights of Belleville, noticed in the shop of a seller of bric-à-brac an old horse-pistol. He threw his flowering branch on the pavement and cried :

"Mother What's-your-name, I'll borrow your machine."

And he ran off with the pistol.

Two minutes after, a crowd of frightened bourgeois, flying through the Rue Amelot and the Rue Basse, met the lad, who was brandishing his pistol and singing :

"La nuit on ne voit rien,
Le jour on voit très bien,
D'un écrit apocryphe
Le bourgeois s'ébouriffe
Pratiquez la vertu,
Tutu chapeau pointu !"

("Nothing is visible at night,
All things by day are clear to sight,
A manuscript apocryphal
The flurried bourgeois doth appal.
Practise then virtue, be the hat
Pointed or round, what matters that !")

It was little Gavroche going to war.

On the boulevard he noticed that his pistol had no hammer.

Whose was this stanza which served him to punctuate his march, and all the other songs which, on occasion, he was fond of singing?

we know not. Who knows? his own, perhaps. Gavroche, besides, kept up acquaintance with all the popular tunes in circulation, and mingled with them his own chirping. A sprite and vagabond, he made a medley of the voices of nature and of the voices of Paris. He combined the repertory of the birds with the repertory of the workshops. He knew some painters' boys, a tribe contiguous to his own. He had been, as it appears, three months apprenticed to a printer. He had one day executed a commission for Monsieur Baour-Lormian, one of the Forty. Gavroche was a gamin of letters.

Gavroche, however, did not suspect that, when on that wretched rainy night he had offered to two brats the hospitality of his elephant, it was for his own brothers he was performing the office of Providence. His brothers in the evening, his father in the morning; such had been his night. On leaving the Rue des Ballets at early dawn, he had returned in haste to the elephant, artistically extracted the two *mômes*, shared with them the sort of breakfast which he had invented, then he had gone away, confiding them to that good mother, the street, who had almost brought himself up. On leaving them, he had given them a rendezvous for that evening at the same spot, and had addressed to them by way

of adieu this discourse: *I cut my stick, otherwise spoken, I am esbigne, (that is, My name is Walker), or as it is called in the Yard, I slope. Brats, if you do not find papa and mamma, come here again this evening. I will fish you up some supper and put you to bed.* The two children, picked up by some policeman and placed at some retreat, or stolen by some mountebank, or simply lost in that immense Chinese Parisian whirl, had not returned. The lower strata of the existing social world are full of such lost traces. Gavroche had not seen them again. Ten or twelve weeks had elapsed since that night. It had happened more than once that he had scratched the top of his head and asked himself: "Where the devil are my two children?"

Meanwhile he had reached, pistol in hand, the Rue du Pont-aux-Choux. He remarked that there was only in that street one shop still open, and, it was worthy of reflection, that was the shop of a pastry-cook. It was a providential opportunity to eat one more apple-puff before entering on the Unknown. Gavroche stopped, rubbed his stomach, felt in his pockets, turned them inside out, found nothing, not even a sou, and began to shout: "Help!"

It is hard to lack the last cake.

Gavroche none the less continued on his way.

Two minutes after, he was in the Rue Saint-Louis. On crossing the Rue du Parc-Royal he felt the necessity of compensating himself for the impossible apple-puff, and gave himself the immense treat of tearing down in open day the posters of a play.

A little further on, seeing pass by a group of well-to-do gentlemen who appeared to him to be property owners he shrugged his shoulders and spat out haphazard this mouthful of philosophic bile:

"These fund holders, how fat they are! They stuff themselves. They wallow in good dinners. Ask them what they do with their money. They don't know. They eat it. My! how much the belly carries off!"

II.

GAVROCHE ON THE MARCH

Brandishing a pistol without a cock and holding it in your hand in the open street, is such a public function, that Gavroche felt his humor increase at every step. He cried between the scraps of the Marseillaise which he sang:

"All goes well. I suffer a good deal in my left paw, I am broken with my rheumatism, but I am content, citizens. The bourgeois have only to hold firm, I am going to sneeze at them some subversive couplets. What are the police-spies? they are dogs. By Blazes! we must not lose respect for 'dogs,'" (looking at his pistol, which had no hammer or "dog" as it is called in French.) "I would I had one to my pistol. I come from the boulevard, my friends, it is getting hot, and the soup is boiling over a little, it is simmering. It is time to skim the pot. Forward, men! let an impure blood inundate the furrows! I give my days for my country, I shall never be-

hold my concubine again, n-n-no, it's all over, yes. No matter! but that's all right, let us be joyful! Let us fight, crebleu! I have had enough of despotism!"

At this moment the horse of a lancer, in the National Guard, who was passing, having fallen down, Gavroche laid his pistol on the pavement, and helped the man up, then helped to raise up the horse. After which he picked up his pistol and resumed his way.

In the Rue de Thorigny, all was peace and silence. This apathy, peculiar to the Marais, contrasted with the vast surrounding turmoil. Four gossips were chatting on the step of a door. Scotland has her trio of witches, but Paris has her quartettes of gossips; and the "thou shalt be king" would be as lugubriously cast at Bonaparte in Baudoyer Square as to Macbeth on the heath of Armuyr. It would be almost the same croaking.

The gossips in the Rue de Thorigny only troubled themselves about their own affairs. They were three portresses, and a rag-picker with her basket and her hook. They seemed to be all four standing at the four corners of old age, which are decay, decrepitude, ruin, and sorrow.

The rag-picker was humble. In this outdoor world the rag-picker bows, the portress patronizes. The things thrown into the street

are, as the concierges choose, fat or lean, according to the fancy of the person who makes the pile. There may be kindness in the broom.

This rag-picker was grateful over her basket, and she smiled, what a smile! at the three portresses. They were saying such things as this:

"Ah, now, your cat is always spiteful, then?"

"My God, cats, you know, are naturally the enemies of dogs. It's the dogs that complain."

"And folks too."

"Yet cat's fleas do not run after people."

"That's not the trouble, the dogs are dangerous. I remember one year when there were so many dogs that they were obliged to notice it in the papers. It was the time when there were at the Tuileries large sheep who dragged the little carriage of the king of Rome. Do you remember the king of Rome?"

"I, I liked the Duc de Bordeaux better."

"I, I knew Louis XVII. I like Louis XVII. better."

"How dear meat is, Mame Patagon!"

"Ah! don't talk about it, butcher's meat is a horror. A horrible horror. They have nothing but tough meat now."

Here the rag-picker intervened:

"Ladies, trade does not go on at all. The garbage heaps are abominable. Folks don't throw away anything now. They eat all."

"There are poorer folk than you, Vargoulême."

"Ah, that's true," replied the rag-picker, with deference, "I have a business."

There was a pause, and the rag-picker, yielding to that need of display which is at the bottom of the human heart, added:

"Of a morning, when I go home, I sift out my basket, I make my sorties (probably sortings). That makes heaps in my room. I put the rags in a hamper, the cabbage stalks in a tub, the pieces of linen in my cupboard, the woolen rags in my bureau, the old papers in the corner of the window, the things good to eat in my porringer, the bits of glass in the fire-place, the old shoes behind the door, and the bones under my bed."

Gavroche, who had stopped behind, was listening.

"Old women," said he, "what business have you to talk politics?"

A broadside assailed him, composed of a quadruple hoot.

"Here's another scoundrel!"

"What's that he has in his stump? A pistol?"

"I just ask you a bit, what a beggar of a *môme!*"

"They are never quiet if they are not upsetting the authorities."

Gavroche disdainfully limited himself, for all reprisal, to elevating the tip of his nose with his thumb, and opening his hand to its full extent.

The rag-picker cried:

"The barefooted scamp!"

She who answered to the name of Mame Patagon struck her two hands together, scandalized:

"There are going to be troubles, that's certain. The blackguard over the way with the beard I used to see pass every morning with a young girl in a pink bonnet on his arm, this morning I saw him pass, he was giving his arm to a gun. Mame Bacheux says there was a revolution last week at . . . at . . . at . . .—where the veal comes from! at Pontoise. And then, see him there with his pistol, that horror of a blackguard! It seems the Célestins are full of cannon. What would you have the government do with these scapegraces who can only invent ways to upset the world, after we were beginning to be a little quiet, after all the trouble we have had, Good Lord God! that poor Queen whom I saw go by in a cart! And all this is going

to raise the price of snuff again. It is infamous! And I will certainly go and see you guillotined, malefactor."

"You sniffle, my ancient," said Gavroche. "Blow your promontory."

And he passed on.

When he was in the Rue Pavée the ragpicker came back into his mind, and he made this soliloquy:

"You do wrong to insult the Revolutionaries, Mother Cornerpost. This pistol is in your interest. It is so that you may have in your basket more good things to eat."

All at once he heard a noise behind him; it was the portress Patagon who had followed him and who, from a distance, was shaking her fist at him, crying:

"You are only a bastard!"

"Bah," said Gavroche, "I amuse myself at that in a profound manner."

A little later he was passing the Hôtel Lamoignon. There he burst into this appeal:

"Away, to the battle!"

And he was attacked by an access of melancholy. He regarded his pistol with an air of reproach, which seemed an attempt to mollify it.

"I go off," said he, "but you do not go off."

One dog may distract attention from an-

other. A very thin cur passed by. Gavroche was moved to pity.

"My poor little bow-wow," said he to it, "you must have swallowed a barrel, since you show all the hoops."

Then he proceeded toward the Orme Saint-Gervais.

III.

JUST INDIGNATION OF A BARBER

The worthy barber who drove away the two little ones for whom Gavroche had opened the paternal intestines of the elephant, was at this moment in his shop, engaged in shaving an old legionary soldier, who had served under the Empire. They were chatting. The barber had naturally spoken to the veteran about the émeute, then about General Lamarque, and from Lamarque they had come to the emperor. Hence a conversation between the barber and the soldier which Prudhomme, had he been present, would have enriched with arabesques, and which he would have entitled: *Dialogue of the razor and of the sabre.*

"Monsieur," said the barber, "how did the emperor mount on horseback?"

"Badly. He did not know how to fall. So he never fell."

"Had he fine horses? he must have had fine horses?"

"The day when he gave me the cross I remarked his animal. It was a capering mare, all white. It had its ears very far apart, the saddle deep, a fine head marked with a black star, the neck very long, the knees strongly jointed, the ribs protruding, the shoulders oblique, the hind-quarters powerful. A little above fifteen hands high."

"A pretty horse," said the barber.

"It was his majesty's animal."

The barber felt that after this word a little silence was befitting, he conformed himself, then he went on:

"The emperor was never wounded more than once, was he, monsieur?"

The old soldier replied, with the calm and sovereign accent of the man who had been there:

"In the heel. At Ratisbon. I never saw him so well dressed as on that day. He was as neat as a sou."

"And you, Monsieur Veteran, you have been often wounded?"

"I?" said the soldier, "oh! no great thing. I received at Marengo two sabre-cuts on my neck, a bullet in my right arm at Austerlitz, another in the left hip at Jena, at Friedland a bayonet-thrust—there,—at Moscow seven or eight lance prods, never mind where, at Lützen a sprint of shell crushed a

finger . . .—Ah! and then at Waterloo a bullet from a shot in my thigh. That's all."

"How glorious it is," exclaimed the barber, with a Pindaric accent, "to die on the field of battle! I! on my word of honor, sooner than die in my bed, of disease, slowly, a little every day, with drugs, cataplasms, clysters, and medicine, I would sooner prefer to receive a cannon-ball in my belly!"

"You are not fastidious," said the soldier.

He had hardly ended when a frightful crash shook the shop. A pane of glass in the front window had been suddenly smashed.

"Oh, God!" cried he, "there is one!"

"What?"

"A cannon-ball."

"Here it is," said the soldier.

And he picked up something which was rolling on the ground. It was a flint-stone.

The barber ran to the broken window, and saw Gavroche flying at full speed toward the market of Saint-Jean. In passing before the shop of the barber, Gavroche, who had the two *mômes* at heart, could not resist the desire of wishing him good-day, and he had cast a stone through his pane.

"Look you!" yelled the barber, who from white had become blue, "he makes mischief for mischief's sake. What has anybody done to that gamin?"

IV.

THE CHILD WONDERS AT THE OLD MAN

Meanwhile, Gavroche at the market of Saint-Jean, of which the guard was already disarmed, came—to effect his junction—with a band led by Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Feuilly. They were more or less armed. Bahorel and Jean Prouvaire had joined them and swelled the group. Enjolras had a double-barreled fowling-piece, Combeferre a musket of the National Guard bearing a number of a legion, and in his waist-belt two pistols, which his coat being unbuttoned allowed to be seen, Jean Prouvaire an old cavalry musketoon, Bahorel a carbine; Courfeyrac brandished an unsheathed sword-cane. Feuilly, with a naked sabre in his hand, marched in advance shouting: "Long live Poland!"

They reached the Quai Morland without cravats, without hats, panting for breath, drenched with the rain, with lightning in their eyes. Gavroche approached them calmly.

"Where are we going?"

"Come," said Courfeyrac.

Behind Feuilly marched or rather bounded Bahorel, a fish in the water of the émeute. He had a crimson waistcoat, and those words which smash everything. His waistcoat upset a passer-by, who cried, all distracted:

"Here are the reds!"

"The red! the reds!" replied Bahorel. "A comical fear, bourgeois. For my part, I do not tremble before a red poppy, the little red cap does not inspire me with any dismay. Bourgeois, believe me, let us leave the fear of red to horned cattle."

He noticed a corner of a wall, on which was placarded the most peaceful sheet of paper in the world, a permission to eat eggs, a Lenten charge addressed by the archbishop of Paris to his *ouailles* (that is, sheep, or "flock").

Bahorel cried out:

"*Ouailles!*"—a polite way of saying *oies* (geese).

And he tore the charge down from the wall. This conquered Gavroche. From that moment Gavroche began to study Bahorel.

"Bahorel," observed Enjolras, "you are wrong. You should have left that charge alone, it is not with that we have to do, you needlessly expose your passion. Keep your

stock by you. We don't fire out of the ranks any more with the soul than with the gun."

"Each in his own way, Enjolras," retorted Bahorel. "The bishop's prosing offends me, I choose to eat eggs without receiving permission to do so. You have the cold burning style; I, I amuse myself. Moreover, I am not expending myself, I am getting up enthusiasm; and if I have torn down that charge, Hercle! it is to give me an appetite."

This word *Hercle* struck Gavroche. He sought every opportunity of instructing himself, and this tearing down of posters had his esteem. He asked him:

"What do you mean when you say *Hercle?*"

Bahorel answered:

"It means holy name of a dog in Latin."

Here Bahorel noticed at a window a young pale man, with a black beard, who was watching them pass, probably a Friend of the A B C. He shouted to him:

"Quick, some cartridges! *para bellum* (prepare for war)."

"*Bel homme* (a handsome man)! that's true," said Gavroche, who now comprehended Latin.

A tumultuous crowd accompanied them, students, artists, young men affiliated to the Cougourde of Aix, artisans, lightermen, armed with clubs and with bayonets, some, like

Combeferre, with pistols passed through their trouser-belt. An old man, who appeared very aged, marched in this band. He was not armed at all, and hurried on, that he might not be left behind, though he had a thoughtful expression. Gavroche perceived him.

"*Keksekca*" ("Whoshat")? said he to Courfeyrac.

"It is an old man."

It was M. Mabeuf.

V

THE OLD MAN

We must tell what had occurred.

Enjolras and his friends were on the Boulevard Bourdon near the public granaries, at the moment when the dragoons charged. Enjolras, Courfeyrac, and Combeferre were among those who turned into the Rue Bassompierre shouting: "To the barricades!" In the Rue Lesdiguières they met an old man walking along.

What had attracted their attention was that this old goodman was walking zigzagedly as if he were drunk. Moreover, he had his hat in his hand, although it had been raining all the morning, and was raining rather hard at that very moment. Courfeyrac had recognized Father Mabeuf. He knew him through having many times accompanied Marius as far as his door. Knowing the peaceful and more than timid habits of the churchwarden-bibliomaniac, and stupefied at seeing him in the midst of this tumult, within two steps of the

charges of cavalry, almost in the midst of the fusillade, bareheaded in the rain, and walking about among bullets, he had accosted him, and the rioter of twenty-five years and the octogenarian had exchanged this dialogue:

"Monsieur Mabeuf, return to your house."

"Wherefore?"

"There is going to be a row."

"That's good."

"Sabre-cuts, musket-shots, Monsieur Mabeuf."

"That's good."

"Cannon-shots."

"That's good. Where are you going, the rest of you?"

"We are going to level the government with the earth."

"That's good."

And he began to follow them. From that moment he had not said one word. His step had become suddenly firm, some workmen offered him an arm, he had declined it with a shake of the head. He advanced almost to the front rank of the column, having altogether, at the same time, the movement of a man who is marching and the face of a man who sleeps.

"What a determined old fellow!" murmured the students. The rumor ran through the assemblage that he was—an ex-conventionalist—an old regicide.

The mob had turned into the Rue de la Verrerie. Little Gavroche marched in the van, singing at the top of his voice, which made him a sort of bugler. He sang:

" Voici la lune qui paraît,
Quand irons-nous dans la forêt ?
Demandait Charlot à Charlotte.
Tou tou tou
Pour Chatou.
Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

" Pour avoir bu de grand matin
La rosée à même le tym,
Deux moineaux étaient en ribote.
Zi zi zi
Pour Passy.
Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

" Et ces deux pauvres petits loups
Comme deux grives étaient soûls ;
Un tigre en riait dans sa grotte.
Don don don
Pour Meudon.
Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

" L'un jurait et l'autre sacrait.
Quand irons-nous dans la forêt ?
Demandait Charlot à Charlotte.
Tin tin tin
Pour Pantin.
Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte."

("The moon is shining overhead,
So Charley once to Charlotte said,
When shall we to the forest fly?
Lou lcu lou
For Chatou.
Only one God, one king, one farthing, and one boot have I.

"For having drunk in early morn
The dew with thyme 'neath yonder thorn,
Fuddled, behold, two sparrows lie.
Ri ri ri
For Passy.
Only one God, one king, one farthing, and one boot have I.

"Poor little wolves! they are not sane,
For they are drunk as thrushes twain;
A tiger laughed in cave hard by.
Ton ton ton
For Meudon.
Only one God, one king, one farthing, and one boot have I.

"One sparrow cursed, the other swore.
To Charlotte Charley said once more,
When shall we to the forest fly?
Bin bin bin
For Pantin.
Only one God, one king, one farthing, and one boot have I.")

They were directing their way toward Saint-Merry.

VI.

RECRUITS

The band increased every instant. Near to the Rue des Billettes, a man of tall stature, turning gray, whose rough and bold mien Courfeyrac, Enjolras, and Combeferre remarked, but whom none of them knew, joined himself to them. Gavroche, busy singing, whistling, shouting, going on ahead, and rapping on the shutters of the shops with the butt of his pistol, without a hammer, paid no attention to this man.

It happened that, in the Rue de la Verrerie, they passed in front of Courfeyrac's door.

"That's lucky," said Courfeyrac, "I have forgotten my purse and I have lost my hat." He left the company and went up to his room four stairs at a time. He took an old hat and his purse. He took also a very large square box of the size of a portmanteau, which was hidden among his dirty linen. As he was running down stairs again his portress hailed him:

"Monsieur de Courfeyrac!"

"Portress, what is your name?" retorted Courfeyrac.

The portress stood amazed.

"Why, you know very well, I am the concierge, I am called Mother Veuvain."

"Ah, well, if you ever call me again Monsieur de Courfeyrac I shall call you Mother de Veuvain. Now, speak, what is it? what do you want?"

"There is somebody who wishes to speak to you."

"Who is it?"

"I don't know."

"Where is he?"

"In my lodge."

"To the devil!" said Courfeyrac.

"But he has been waiting for more than an hour for you to come home!" replied the portress.

At the same time a species of young workman, thin, pale, small, marked with freckles, dressed in a torn blouse and a pair of patched ribbed velvet trousers, and who had more the air of a girl attired as a boy than a man, came out from the lodge and said to Courfeyrac in a voice which, indeed, was not the least in the world the voice of a woman:

"Monsieur Marius, if you please?"

"He is not here."

"Will he return here this evening?"

"I don't know anything about it."

And Courfeyrac added: "As for myself, I shall not be in to-night."

The young man regarded him fixedly and demanded of him:

"Why not?"

"Because."

"Where are you going, then?"

"How does that concern you?"

"Shall I carry your chest for you?"

"I am going to the barricades."

"Do you want me to go with you?"

"If you like!" replied Courfeyrac. "The street is free, the pavements are for everybody."

And he ran off to rejoin his friends. When he had rejoined them, he gave the box to one of them to carry. It was not till a quarter of an hour after that he noticed that the young man was, in fact, following them.

A mob does not go exactly where it wishes. We have explained that a gust of wind carries it along. They passed Saint-Merry, and found themselves, without knowing exactly how, in the Rue Saint-Denis.

BOOK TWELVE

CORINTH

I.

HISTORY OF CORINTH FROM ITS FOUNDATION

The Parisians, who, to-day, upon entering the Rue Rambuteau from the side of the markets, notice on their right, opposite the Rue Mondétour, a basket-maker's shop having for a sign a basket in the shape of Napoleon the Great, with this inscription:

"*Napoleon est fait*
Tout en osier,—"

("Napoleon is made,
All of willow braid,—")

very little suspect the terrible scenes which this very site saw hardly thirty years ago.

Here were the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which old title-deeds wrote Chanverrerie, and the celebrated wine-shop called Corinth.

Our readers will remember all that has been said about the barricade erected on this spot, and eclipsed elsewhere by the barricade Saint-Merry. It is on this famous barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, to-day fallen into a

profound night, that we are going to throw a little light.

We may be permitted to recur, for the clearness of our narrative, to the simple method already employed by us for Waterloo. Persons who wish to represent to themselves in a tolerably exact manner the blocks of houses which stood at that period near the Pointe Saint-Eustache, at the north-east corner of the markets of Paris, where is now the opening of the Rue de Rambuteau, need only figure to themselves touching the Rue Saint-Denis at the top and the markets at the base, a letter N, of which the two vertical strokes would be the Rue de la Grande-Truanderie, and the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and of which the Rue de la Petite-Truanderie would make the transverse stroke. The old Rue Mondétour cut these three strokes at the most tortuous angles. So that the labyrinthine entanglement of these four streets was sufficient to make, upon a space of one hundred square yards, between the markets and the Rue Saint-Denis in one direction, and between the Rue du Cygne and the Rue des Prêcheurs in the other direction, seven islets of houses, fantastically cut, of different heights, standing side-ways, and as if hap-hazardly, and hardly separated, like the blocks of stone in a stone-cutters' yard, by narrow straits.

We say narrow straits, and we cannot give

a more correct idea of these obscure, narrow, angular lanes, bordered by tenements eight stories high. These hovels were so decrepit that in the Rues de la Chanvrerie and de la Petite-Truanderie, the frontages were supported by beams running across from one house to the other. The street was narrow and the gutter wide, the passer-by walked on a pavement always wet, by the sides of shops, like cellars, of heavy posts shod with iron, of enormous piles of filth, of gates armed with enormous venerable palings. The Rue Rambuteau has devastated all this.

The name Mondétour pictures marvellously the sinuosities of all this route. A little further on it was found even better expressed by the *Rue Pirouette*, which projected itself into the Rue Mondétour.

The wayfarer who turned out of the Rue Saint-Denis into the Rue de la Chanvrerie saw it little by little contract before him, as if he had entered an elongated funnel. At the end of the street, which was very short, he found the passage barred on the side of the markets by a tall row of houses, and he might have believed himself in a blind alley if he had not perceived to the right and to the left two black trenches through which he could escape. It was the Rue Mondétour, which joined on one side the Rue des Prêcheurs, on the other the

Rue du Cygne and la Petite-Truanderie. At the end of this sort of blind alley, at the corner of the trench on the right, might be seen a house less elevated than the rest, forming a sort of cape on the street.

It is in this house, of two stories only, that an illustrious wine-shop had been festively installed for three hundred years. This wine-shop produced a joyous noise at the very spot which old Théophile indicated in these two lines:

"*Là branle le squelette horrible*
D'un pauvre amant qui se pendit."

("There where a lover hanged himself in woe
His horrid skeleton swings to and fro.")

The spot was good, the landlords succeeded each other from father to son.

In the time of Mathurin Régnier this wine-shop was called the *Pot-aux-Roses* (Pot of Roses), and as rebuses were the fashion, it had for a sign a *poteau* (post), painted rose-color. In the last century, the worthy Natoire, one of the fantastic masters disdained at the present day by the rigid school, having got tipsy several times in this wine-shop at the same table where Régnier had got drunk, had painted, out of gratitude, a bunch of grocers'-currants on the rose-colored post. The landlord, in delight, changed his sign, and had gilded below the bunch these words: *au*

Raisin de Corinthe. Hence the name, *Corinthe*. Nothing is more natural to drunkards than ellipses. An ellipse is the zigzag of phrase. Corinth had little by little dethroned the Pot-aux-Roses. The last landlord of the dynasty, Father Hucheloup, not even knowing the tradition, had the post painted blue.

A ground-floor room in which was the bar, a first-floor room in which was a billiard-table, a spiral wooden staircase piercing the ceiling, wine on the tables, smoke on the walls, candles in broad day, such was the wine-shop. A staircase with a trap-door in the ground-floor room led to the cellar. On the second-floor were the apartments of the Hucheloups. You ascended by a staircase, more like a ladder than a staircase, the only entrance to which was a back door in the apartment on the large first-floor. Under the roof, two garrets, the nests of the maid-servants. The kitchen shared the ground-floor with the bar.

Father Hucheloup was perhaps a born chemist, he was a real cook; people not only drank in his wine-shop, but they ate there. Hucheloup had invented an excellent dish, which could be only eaten at his house, it was stuffed carp, which he called *carpes au gras*. This was eaten by the light of a tallow candle, or a lamp of the Louis XVI. style, on

tables on which was nailed an oilcloth in lieu of a table-cloth. People came there from a long distance. Hucheloup had, one fine morning, thought it proper to advertise passers-by of his "specialty": he dipped a brush in a pot of blacking, and as he had an orthography of his own, as he had a cuisine of his own, he improvised on his wall this remarkable inscription:

CARPES HO GRAS.

One winter the showers and the hailstorms had amused themselves by effacing the "s" which terminated the first word, and the "G" which commenced the third; it was left thus:

CARPE HO RAS.

Time and the rain aiding, a humble gastronomic announcement had become a profound counsel.

In this way it happened that not knowing French, Father Hucheloup had known Latin, that he had brought philosophy out of the kitchen, and while, simply wishing to eclipse Carême, he had equalled Horace. And the striking thing was that this also meant: "enter my wine-shop."

Nothing of all this exists at the present day. The Mondétour labyrinth was gutted and opened wide in 1847, and probably is

now no more. The Rue de la Chanvrerie and Corinth have disappeared under the pavement of the Rue Rambuteau.

As we have said, Corinth was one of the places of meeting, if not a rallying point, of Courfeyrac and of his friends. It was Grantaire who had discovered Corinth. He had entered for the sake of the *Carpe Horas* and he had returned for the sake of the *Carpes au gras*. They drank there, they ate there, they shouted there; they paid little, they paid badly, they didn't pay at all, they were always welcome. Father Hucheloup was a good fellow.

Hucheloup, whom we have just called a good fellow, was an eating-house keeper with mustaches; an amusing variety. He always had an ill-tempered look, seemed to wish to intimidate his customers, grumbled at persons who came into his house, and had the air of being more disposed to pick a quarrel with them than to serve them with soup. And yet, we maintain, people were always welcome. This peculiarity had filled his shop, and brought young men to him who said: "Let us go and hear Father Hucheloup *grumble*." He had been a fencing-master. All of a sudden he would burst out laughing. Coarse voice, devilish good fellow. His was a comic heart with a tragic face; he asked for nothing

better than to frighten you; something like those snuff-boxes which have the shape of a pistol. The detonation produces a sneeze.

He had for wife a Mother Hucheloup, a bearded being, very ugly.

About 1830 Father Hucheloup died. With him disappeared the secret of the *carpes au gras*. His widow, hardly consolable, continued the wine-shop. But the cooking degenerated, and became execrable; the wine, which had always been bad, was frightful. Courfeyrac and his friends continued, however, to go to Corinth,—through pity, said Bossuet.

Widow Hucheloup was short-winded and deformed, with rustic reminiscences. She deprived them of their insipidity by her pronunciation. She had a way of her own of saying things which spiced her village and springtime reminiscences. It had formerly been her delight, she affirmed, to hear "*les loups-de-gorge chanter dans les ogrépines*," a purely untranslatable expression of delight in hearing redbreasts singing in ogrish or awe-thorns.

The room on the first-floor, where was "the restaurant," was a large and long apartment, crowded with three-legged stools, foot-stools, chairs, benches, and tables, and an old rickety billiard-table. It was reached by the spiral

staircase which led to a square hole in the corner of the room, like the hatchway of a ship.

This apartment, lighted by only one narrow window and a lamp always burning, had the appearance of a garret. All the articles of furniture on four legs behaved as if they had only three. The whitewashed walls had for sole ornament the following quatrain in honor of Mame Hucheloup:

"*Elle étonne a dix pas, elle épouvante à deux.*
Une verrue habite en son nez hasardeux;
On tremble à chaque instant qu'elle ne vous la mouche,
Et qu'un beau jour son nez ne tombe dans sa bouche."

("She astounds at ten paces, at two causes fear,
For a wart on her dangerous nose doth appear;
Lest she blow it to you, you tremble with fright,
In her mouth, too, you fear it will drop in your sight.")

This was written in charcoal on the wall.

Mame Hucheloup, very like her description, went back and forth from morning till night, in front of this quatrain with perfect tranquility. Two servant-girls, called Matelote and Gibelotte (Chowder and Fricassee), and who were never known by other names, helped Mame Hucheloup in placing on the tables small pitchers of blue wine, and the various broths which were served to the hungry in earthenware bowls. Matelote, fat, round, red-haired, and

noisy, an ex-favorite sultana of the defunct Hucheloup was uglier than no matter what mythological monster; yet, as it is proper that the servant should always keep behind the mistress, she was less ugly than Mame Hucheloup. Gibelotte, tall, delicate, white with a lymphatic whiteness, rings round her eyes, eyelids drooping, always exhausted and oppressed, suffering from what may be called chronic lassitude, the first to rise, the last to go to bed, waited on everybody, even the other servant, in silence and with gentleness, smiling through her fatigue with a sort of vague, sleepy smile.

Before entering the restaurant apartment, you read this line written in chalk by Courfeyrac:

"*Régale si tu peux et mange si tu l'oses.*"

("Feast if you can and eat if you dare.")

II

PRELIMINARY GAYETIES

Laigle of Meaux, we know, lived more with Joly than elsewhere. He had a lodging much as the bird has a branch. The two friends lived together, ate together, slept together. Everything in common, even Musichetta to a little extent. They were, like the verse fitted to a rhyme, as we say, *bini* (twins). On the morning of the 5th of June they went to breakfast at Corinth. Joly who had the snuffles, had a bad cold in his head, which Laigle was beginning to share. Laigle's coat was threadbare, but Joly was well-dressed.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning when they pushed opened the door of Corinth.

They went up to the first-floor.

Matelote and Gibelotte received them.

"Oysters, cheese, and ham," said Laigle.

And they sat down at a table.

The wine-shop was empty; there was no one but they two.

Gibelotte, recognizing Joly and Laigle, placed a bottle of wine on the table.

As they were at the first oysters, a head appeared at the hatchway of the stairway and a voice said:

"I was passing. I smelt, in the street, a delicious odor of Brie cheese. I stepped in."

It was Grantaire.

Grantaire took a stool and sat down at the table.

Gibelotte, seeing Grantaire, placed two bottles of wine on the table.

That made three.

"Are you going to drink these two bottles?" demanded Laigle of Grantaire.

Grantaire replied:

"All men are ingenious, you alone are ingenuous. Two bottles never astonished a man."

The others had commenced with eating, Grantaire commenced with drinking. A half-bottle was quickly swallowed.

"Have you a hole in your stomach?" resumed Laigle.

"You surely have one in your elbow," said Grantaire.

And after emptying his glass, he added:

"Ah, ha, Laigle of the funeral orations, your coat is old."

"I hope so," replied Laigle. "That makes us agree so well, my coat and I. It has assumed all my wrinkles, does not hurt me anywhere, it has moulded itself to my deformities, it is complacent to all my movements; and I feel it only because it keeps me warm. Old clothes are the same thing as old friends."

"That's true," cried Joly entering into the conversation, "an old *habit* (coat), is an old *abi* (friend, pronounced with a snuffle)."

"Especially," said Grantaire, "in the mouth of a man with the snuffles."

"Grantaire," demanded Laigle, "have you come from the boulevard?"

"No."

"We come from watching the head of the procession pass, Joly and I."

"It is a 'barvellous' sight," said Joly.

"How quiet this street is!" cried Laigle. "Who could suspect that Paris is turned topsy-turvy? It is easy to see that formerly there were monasteries all round here! Du Breul and Sauval give a list, and the Abbé Lebeuf. They were all around here, they swarmed, the shod, the unshod, the tonsured, the bearded, the gray, the black, the white, the Franciscans, the Minims, the Capuchins, the Carmelites, little Augustines, the great Augustines, the old Augustines. . . They littered."

"Don't talk about monks," interrupted Grantaire, "it makes me want to scratch myself."

Then he exclaimed:

"Bouh! I have just swallowed a bad oyster. Here is the hypochondria back upon me. The oysters are spoiled, the servant-girls are ugly. I hate the human race. I passed a whole hour in the Rue Richelieu before the great public library. That pile of oyster-shells, which is called a library, disgusts me to think of. What paper! what ink! what scribbling! Somebody has written all that! What clod-hopper was it that said man was a biped without feathers? And then I met a pretty girl whom I know, lovely as the spring, worthy to be called Floreal, and she was ravished, transported, happy, with the angels, the wretch, because yesterday a horrid banker pitted with small-pox deigned to fancy her! Alas! woman watches for a keeper no less than a fop; cats chase mice as well as birds. This damsel not two months ago was living respectably in a garret, she fitted little copper circles in the eyelets of corsets, how do you call it? she sewed, she had a folding-bed, she lived by the side of a pot of flowers, she was content. Now she is a bankeress. The transformation took place last night. I met the victim this morning perfectly joyous. What is hideous is that

the wretched creature was quite as pretty to-day as yesterday. Her financier did not appear upon her face. Roses have this more or less than women, that the traces which the caterpillars leave on them are visible. Ah! there is no morality left in the world, and I call to witness the myrtle, symbol of love, the laurel, symbol of war, the olive, that tomfool symbol of peace, the apple-tree which nearly strangled Adam with its pips, and the fig-tree, the grandfather of petticoats. As to rights, do you want to know what rights are? The Gauls covet Clusium, Rome protects Clusium, and asks what wrong Clusium has done them. Brennus answers: 'The wrong which Alba did to you, the wrong that Fidenæ did to you, the wrong that the Æqui, the Volscians, and the Sabines did to you. They were your neighbors. The Clusians are ours. We understand neighborhood as you do. You have stolen Alba, we take Clusium.' Rome says: 'You shall not take Clusium.' Brennus took Rome. Then he cried: *Væ victis!* That is what rights are. Ah! in this world, what beasts of prey! what eagles! it makes my flesh creep."

He held out his glass to Joly, who filled it, then he drank, and continued almost without having been interrupted by the glass of wine, which no one noticed, not even himself:

"Brennus who takes Rome is an eagle; the banker who takes the grisette is an eagle. No more shame here than there. Then let us believe in nothing. There is only one reality: drinking. Whatever your opinion may be, whether you are for the lean cock, like the canton of Uri, or for the fat cock, like the canton of Glarus, matters little, drink. You talk to me of the boulevard, the procession, *et cætera*. Ah, ha, are we going to have another revolution? This poverty of means on the part of the good God astonishes me. He must every moment set to work greasing the groove of events. Things stick, things won't move. Quick, a revolution. The good God has always his hands black with that filthy cart-grease. In His place I would act more simply, I would not be winding up my machinery every instant, I would lead the human race fair and square, I would knit facts mesh by mesh without breaking the thread, I would have no temporary substitutes, I would have no extraordinary repertory. What you fellows call progress marches by two motors, men and events. But it is a sad thing, from time to time, the exceptional becomes necessary. For events as well as for men the stock company is not sufficient; among men there must be geniuses, and among events, revolutions. Great accidents are the law; the order of

things cannot go along without them; and, judging from the apparitions of comets, we might be tempted to believe that heaven itself has need of leading actors. At the moment when it is least expected, God placards a meteor on the wall of the firmament. Some fantastic star follows, underlined by an enormous tail. And that makes Cæsar to die. Brutus gives him a blow with a knife, and God a blow with a comet. Crack, here is an aurora borealis, here is a revolution, here is a great man; '93 in big letters, Napoleon in a catch-line, the comet of 1811 at the top of the poster. Ah! the beautiful blue poster, all studded with unexpected flashes! Boum! boum! an extraordinary spectacle. Raise your eyes, loungers. Everything is dishevelled, the star as well as the drama. Good God, it is too much and it is not enough. These resources, used in an emergency, seem magnificence and are only poverty. My friends, Providence is put to expedients. A revolution, what does that prove? That God is running short. He produces a *coup d'état*, because there is a solution of continuity between the present and the future, and because, Himself God, He is unable to join the two ends. In fact, this confirms me in my conjectures as to the state of Jehovah's fortune; and on seeing so much discomfort above and

below, so much shabbiness and pinching and saving and distress in heaven and on earth, from the bird which has not a grain of millet, to myself who have not a hundred thousand livres of income, on seeing human destiny which is very much worn, and even royal destiny which shows the thread, witness the Prince de Condé hanged, on seeing winter, which is nothing else but a rent in the zenith, through which the wind blows, on seeing so many tatters, even in the brand-new purple of morning, on the tops of the hills, on seeing the drops of dew, those false pearls, on seeing the hoar-frost, that paste, on seeing humanity unripped and events patched, and so many spots on the sun, and so many holes in the moon, on seeing so much misery everywhere, I suspect that God is not rich. He keeps up appearances, it is true, but I see the pressure. He gives a revolution, as a merchant whose cash-box is empty gives a ball. We must not judge the goods by appearances. Under the gilding of heaven I catch a glimpse of a poor universe. In creation there is a bankruptcy. That is why I am dissatisfied. See, this is the fifth of June, it is almost night; since morning I have been waiting for daybreak, it has not come, and I will bet that it does not come to-day. It is the inexactitude of a badly-paid clerk. Yes, everything is badly arranged,

nothing fits anything, this old world is all rickety, I range myself in the opposition. Everything goes cross-purposed; the universe is a nuisance. It is like children, those who want get nothing, and those who don't want get something. Total: I scoff. Beyond that, Laigle of Meaux, this bald-head, afflicts my sight. It humiliates me to think that I am the same age as that knee. However, I criticize, but I do not insult. The universe is what it is. I speak here without any evil intention, and to relieve my conscience. Receive, Father Eternal, the assurance of my distinguished consideration. Ah! by all the saints of Olympus, and by all the gods of Paradise, I was not made to be a Parisian, that is to say, to ricochet forever like a shuttle-cock between two battledores, from a group of idlers to a group of rioters! I was made to be a Turk, looking all day at Oriental jades executing those exquisite dances of Egypt, salacious as the dreams of a chaste man, or a Beauce peasant, or a Venetian gentleman surrounded by gentle-dames, or a small German prince, furnishing one-half of a foot-soldier to the Germanic Confederation, and occupying his leisure hours in drying his socks upon his hedge, that is to say, upon his frontier! Such were the destinies for which I was born! Yes, I said Turk, and I will not unsay it. I do

not comprehend why the Turks are usually held in bad repute; Mahomet has some good; let us respect the inventor of seraglios with houris, and Paradises of Odalisques! Let us not insult Mahometanism, the only religion that is adorned with a hen-coop! After this, I insist on drinking. The earth is a great tom-foolery. And it appears that all these imbeciles are going to fight, to break each other's heads, to massacre one another, in the middle of summer, in the month of June, when they might go off with some creature on their arm to breathe in the fields that immense cup of tea the new-mown hay! Truly, too many stupidities are committed. An old broken lantern, which I saw just now at the house of a vendor of bric-à-brac suggests to me one reflection: 'It is time to enlighten the human race.' Yes, I am sad again! That is from swallowing an oyster and a revolution the wrong way! I am growing lugubrious again. Oh! the frightful old world! People strive, are destitute, prostitute themselves, kill themselves, they grow accustomed to it!"

And Grantaire after this fit of eloquence had a fit of coughing, which he deserved.

"Speakig of revolutiod," said Joly, "it seebs that Barius is decidedly aborous."

"Do you know who with?" demanded Laigle.

"Do."

"No?"

"Do! I tell you."

"The loves of Marius!" exclaimed Grantaire. "I can see them from here. Marius is a fog and he will have found a vapor. Marius is of the poetic race. Who says poet, says fool. *Thymbræus Apollo.* Marius and his Marie, or his Maria, or his Mariette, or his Marion, must make funny lovers. I can reckon up what it all is. Ecstasies in which they forget to kiss. Chaste on the earth, but coupling in the infinite. They are souls that have senses. They sleep together in the stars."

Grantaire was entering upon his second bottle, and perhaps his second harangue, when a new head emerged from the square hole of the staircase. It was a boy under ten years of age, ragged, very small, yellow, with snouty face, a quick eye, an enormous head of hair, drenched with the rain, an air of content.

The lad choosing, without hesitating, among the three, though he evidently knew none of them, addressed himself to Laigle of Meaux.

"Are you Monsieur Bossuet?" asked he.

"That is my nickname," replied Laigle. "What do you want with me?"

"Just this. A big light-haired gent on the boulevard said to me: 'Do you know Mother

Hucheloup?' I said: 'Yes, Rue Chanvrerie, the old one's widow.' He said to me: 'Go there. You will find Monsieur Bossuet there, and you say to him from me: A—B—C.' It's some joke they are playing on you, isn't it? He gave me ten sous."

"Joly, lend me ten sous," said Laigle; and turning to Grantaire: "Grantaire, lend me ten sous."

This made twenty sous, which Laigle gave the lad.

"Thank you, monsieur," said the little boy.

"What is your name?" asked Laigle.

"Navet, the friend of Gavroche."

"Stay with us," said Laigle.

"Breakfast with us," said Grantaire.

The lad replied:

"I can't, I am in the procession, it is I who have to cry, 'Down with Polignac.'"

And, drawing his foot a long way behind him, which is the most respectful of bows possible, he went off.

The child gone, Grantaire resumed his talk:

"That is the pure gamin. There are many varieties of the genus gamin. The notary-gamin is called 'leap-the-gutter,' the cook-gamin is called 'scullion,' the baker-gamin is called 'doughey,' the lackey-gamin is called 'tiger,' the sailor-gamin is called 'powder-monkey,' the soldier-gamin is called 'child of

the regiment,' the painter-gamin is called 'rapin,' the tradesman-gamin is called 'errand-boy,' the courtier-gamin is called 'page,' the royal-gamin is called 'dauphin,' the God-gamin is called 'Bambino.'"

Meanwhile, Laigle meditated; he said in a low voice:

"A—B—C, that is to say: Funeral of Lamarque."

"The big light-haired man," observed Grantaire, "is Enjolras, who has sent to notify you."

"Shall we go?" said Bossuet.

"It's raidig," said Joly. "I have sworó to go through fire, dot through water. I do dot wish to bake by cold wordt."

"I stay here," said Grantaire. "I prefer a breakfast to a hearse."

"Conclusion: we remain," continued Laigle. "Ah well, let us drink then. Besides, we may miss the funeral without missing the émeute."

"Ah! the ébeute, I'b id that," cried Joly.

Laigle rubbed his hands:

"So then they are going to retouch the Revolution of 1830. In fact it binds the people in the armholes."

"It's all one to me, your revolution," said Grantaire. "I don't execrate the present government. It is the crown tempered by the night-cap of cotton. It is a sceptre termi-

nating in an umbrella. In fact to-day, I should think, in such weather as this, Louis-Philippe might use his royalty for two ends, to stretch out the sceptre-end against the people, and to open the umbrella-end against the sky."

The room was dark, heavy clouds completed the suppression of the daylight. There was no one in the wine-shop nor in the street, everybody having gone "to see the events."

"Is it midday or midnight?" asked Bossuet. "I can't see a jot. Gibelotte, a light!"

Grantaire, melancholy, was drinking.

"Enjolras disdains me," murmured he. "Enjolras said: 'Joly is ill, Grantaire is drunk.' It was to Bossuet that he sent Navet. Yet, if he had come to fetch me, I would have followed him. So much the worse for Enjolras! I will not go to his funeral."

This resolution taken, Bossuet, Joly, and Grantaire did not stir from the wine-shop. Toward two o'clock in the afternoon, the table at which they sat was covered with empty bottles. Two candles burned on it, one in a copper candlestick, perfectly green, the other in the neck of a cracked water-bottle. Grantaire had led Joly and Bossuet to wine; Bossuet and Joly had brought back Grantaire to joy.

As for Graintaire, since midday, he had got beyond wine, a mediocre inspirer of dreams. Wine with earnest drunkards is

not particularly valued. There is, in ebriety, black magic and white magic; and wine is only white magic. Grantaire was an adventurous drinker of dreams. The blackness of a formidable drunkenness yawning before him, less arrested than it attracted him. He had left the bottle and taken to the dram. The dram is an abyss. Not having at hand either opium or hasheesh, and wishing to fill his brain with mist, he turned to that frightful medley of brandy, stout, and absinthe, which produces such terrible lethargies. Of these three vapors, beer, brandy, absinthe, is made the plumb of the soul. They are three darknesses; the celestial butterfly is drowned in them; and there are formed, in a membranous smoke vaguely condensed into a bats'-wing, three dumb furies, nightmare, night, death, hovering over sleeping Psyche.

Grantaire was not yet at that lugubrious phase; far from it. He was prodigiously gay, and Bossuet and Joly kept even with him. They touched glasses. Grantaire added to the eccentric accentuation of words and ideas the divagation of gesture, he laid with dignity his left hand on his knee, placed his arms akimbo, and with his neckcloth unloosed, bestriding a stool, his glass full in his right hand, he threw at the big servant-girl, Matelote, these solemn words:

"Open the doors of the palace! let everybody belong to the French Academy, and have the right of embracing Madame Hucheloup! Let us drink."

And turning toward Mame Hucheloup, he added:

"Antique woman, consecrated by custom, approach, that I may contemplate thee!"

And Joly exclaimed:

"Batelote ad Gibelotte, dod't give Gradtaire ady bore to drigk. He speds his bodey foolidly. He has odly sidge this bording devoured in shabeful prodigality two fradcs, didety-five cedtibes."

And Grantaire went on:

"Who has unhooked the stars without my permission to place them on the table in place of candles?"

Bossuet, very drunk, had retained his calmness.

He was sitting on the sill of the open window, wetting his back with the rain that was falling, and contemplating his two friends.

All at once he heard behind him a tumult, hurried footsteps, cries of *To arms!* He turned round, and perceived, in the Rue Saint-Denis, at the end of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, Enjolras, who was passing, carbine in hand, and Gavroche with his pistol, Feuilly with his

sabre, Courfeyrac with his sword, Jean Prouvaire with his musketoon, Combeferre with his fowling-piece, Bahorel with his fowling-piece, and the whole armed and stormy band that followed them.

The Rue de la Chanvrerie was hardly as long as the range of a carbine. Bossuet improvised with his two hands a speaking-trumpet round his mouth, and cried:

"Courfeyrac! Courfeyrac! ahoy!"

Courfeyrac heard the call, perceived Bossuet, and walked a few steps down the Rue de la Chanvrerie, exclaiming, "what do you want?" which was crossed by a "where are you going?"

"To make a barricade," responded Courfeyrac.

"Ah, well, here! this is a good place! make it here!"

"That's true, Eagle," said Courfeyrac.

And at a sign from Courfeyrac the band rushed into the Rue de la Chanvrerie.

III.

NIGHT GATHERS OVER GRANTAIRE

The place was, in fact, admirably selected, the entrance of the street was wide, the end narrow, and, like a blind alley, Corinth strangling it, the Rue de Mondétour could be easily barred to the right and to the left, no attack possible except by the Rue Saint-Denis, that is to say, from the front and without cover. Bossuet drunk had had the inspiration of Hannibal sober.

At the irruption of the mob, terror seized the whole street. Not a passer-by who did not go into eclipse. More quickly than a flash of lightning, at the end, on the right, on the left, shops, stalls, alley-gates, windows, window-blinds, garret-windows, shutters of every size, were closed from the ground-floor up to the roofs. A terrified old woman fixed up a mattress before her window on two clothes-props, in order to deaden the musketry. The wine-shop was the only house that remained open; and that for a good

reason, because the band had rushed into it. "Ah, my God! ah, my God!" sighed Mame Hucheloup.

Bossuet had come down to meet Courfeyrac.

Joly, who had come to the window, cried:

"Courfeyrac, you oudht to have daked ad ubbrella. You will dake dold."

Meanwhile, in a few minutes, twenty iron bars were pulled down from the railings in front of the wine-shop, ten yards of pavement had been dug up; Gavroche and Bahorel seized, as it was passing, and tipped over, the dray of a dealer in lime named Anceau, this dray contained three barrels full of lime, which they placed under the piles of paving-stones; Enjolras had raised the trap of the cellar, and all Mame Hucheloup's empty casks had gone to flank the barrels of lime; Feuilly, with his fingers accustomed to color the delicate folds of fans, reinforced the barrels and the dray with two massive piles of stones. Stones improvised like the rest, and taken no one knows whence. Some shoring-timbers had been pulled down from the front of a neighboring house, and laid upon the casks. When Bossuet and Courfeyrac turned round one-half of the street was already barred by a rampart, higher than a man. There is nothing like the popular hand to build up anything that is built by demolishing.

Matelote and Gibelotte were joined to the workmen. Gibelotte went backwards and forwards, loaded with rubbish. Her lassitude helped at the barricade. She served paving-stones, as she would have served wine, with a sleepy air.

An omnibus which had two white horses passed the end of the street.

Bossuet jumped over the stones, ran up, stopped the driver, made the passengers get down, gave his hand to "the ladies," dismissed the conductor, and came back, pulling the vehicle and horses by the bridle.

"An omnibus," said he, "doesn't pass Corinth. *Non licet omnibus adire Corinthum.*"

A moment after, the unharnessed horses were going hap-hazard down the Rue Mondétour, and the omnibus lying on its side completed the barring of the street.

Mame Hucheloup, quite upset, had taken refuge on the first-floor.

Her eyes were wandering and she looked without seeing, crying in a whisper. Her dismayed cries did not dare to issue from her throat.

"It is the end of the world," murmured she.

Joly deposited a kiss on Mame Hucheloup's fat neck, red and wrinkled, and said to Grantaire: "My dear fellow, I have always considered the neck of a woman as a thing infinitely delicate."

But Grantaire was attaining to the highest regions of dithyramb. When Matelote had come up again to the first-floor, Grantaire seized her round the waist, and pushed her toward the window with long shouts of laughter.

"Matelote is ugly!" cried he, "Matelote is the dream of ugliness! Matelote is a chimera. Here is the secret of her birth: a Gothic Pygmalion, who was carving some cathedral gargoyles, fell in love one fine morning with one of them, the most horrible of them. He implored Love to animate it, and that made Matelote. Look at her, citizens! she has hair the color of chromate of lead like that of Titian's mistress, and is a good girl. I will answer that she fights well. Every good girl contains a hero. As for Mother Hucheloup, she is an old brave. Look at her mustaches! she inherited them from her husband. A hussaress, indeed! She will fight, too. They two by themselves will frighten all the suburbs. Comrades, we will overthrow the government, as truly as it is true that there are fifteen intermediate acids between margaric acid and formic acid. For the rest, it's all one to me. Messieurs, my father always detested me because I could not understand mathematics. I only understand love and liberty. I am Grantaire, a good fellow! Never having had

any money, I have not grown accustomed to it, and for that reason have never wanted it; but, if I had been rich, there would have been no more poor! you should have seen! Oh! if good hearts had big purses! how much better things would go! I picture to myself Jesus-Christ with the fortune of Rothschild! How much good He would have done! Matelote, embrace me! You are voluptuous and timid! you have cheeks which call for the kiss of a sister, and lips that demand the kiss of a lover!"

"Hold your tongue, barrel!" said Courfeyrac.

Grantaire replied:

"I am the capitoul and master of the Floral games!"

Enjolras, who was standing on the top of the barricade, gun in hand, raised his handsome, stern face. Enjolras, as we know, blended the Spartan with the Puritan. He would have died at Thermopylæ with Leonidas, and would have burned Drogheda with Cromwell.

"Grantaire!" cried he, "go and sleep off your wine away from here. This is the place for intoxication, and not for drunkenness. Do not dishonor the barricade!"

This angry speech produced on Grantaire a singular effect. It might have been said he

had received a glass of cold water in his face. He appeared suddenly sobered. He sat down, leaned upon a table near the window, gazed at Enjolras with an inexpressible tenderness, and said to him:

"Let me sleep here."

"Go to sleep elsewhere," cried Enjolras.

But Grantaire, still fixing on him his tender and troubled eyes, answered:

"Let me sleep here—until I die here."

Enjolras looked at him with a disdainful eye:

"Grantaire, you are incapable of believing, of thinking, of wishing, of living, and of dying."

Grantaire replied in a grave voice:

"You shall see."

He stammered again a few unintelligible words, then his head fell heavily upon the table, and, as is the usual effect of the second period of ebriety into which Enjolras had roughly and suddenly thrust him, a moment later he was asleep.

IV.

ATTEMPT AT CONSOLATION UPON THE WIDOW HUCHELOUP

Bahorel, in ecstasies with the barricade, cried:

"Here is a street dressed with a low neck! how well it looks!"

Courfeyrac, while gradually demolishing the wine-shop, sought to console the widowed landlady.

"Mother Hucheloup, were you not complaining the other day that you had been summoned by the police, and fined, because Gibelotte had shaken a counterpane out of your window?"

"Yes, my good Monsieur Courfeyrac. Ah! my God! are you going to put that table, too, in your horror? And besides that, for the rug, and also for a pot of flowers which had fallen out of the garret into the street, the authorities fined me a hundred francs. If that is not an abomination!"

"Ah, well! Mother Hucheloup, we are going to avenge you."

Mother Hucheloup, in the reparation that they made her, did not seem to comprehend very well her benefit. She was satisfied after the fashion of the Arabian woman who, having received a blow from her husband, went to complain to her father, crying for vengeance, and saying: "Father, you owe my husband affront for affront." The father demanded: "On which cheek did you receive the blow?" "On the left cheek." The father gave her a blow on the right cheek, and said: "There, be content. Go tell your husband that he has struck my daughter, but I have struck his wife."

The rain had ceased. Some recruits began to arrive. Workmen brought under their blouses a barrel of gunpowder, a hamper containing bottles of vitriol, two or three carnival torches, and a basket full of lamps, "remaining from the fête of the king." That fête was quite recent, having taken place the 1st of May. It was said that these munitions came from a grocer in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, named Pepin. They broke the only lantern in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the corresponding lamp in the Rue Saint-Denis, and all the lamps in the surrounding streets of Mondétour, du Cygne, des Prêcheurs, and de la Grande, and de la Petite-Truanderie.

Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac directed everything. Now two barricades were erected simultaneously, both resting on the house, Corinth, and forming a square; the larger barricade closed the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the other the Rue Mondétour on the side of the Rue du Cygne. This latter barricade, very narrow, was constructed only of casks and of paving-stones. There were about fifty workmen there; some thirty armed with guns; for, on the way, they had effected a wholesale loan at a gunsmith's shop.

Nothing could be more fantastic or more motley than this troop. One had a sleeved waistcoat, a cavalry sabre, and two holster pistols, another was in shirt-sleeves, with a round hat, and a powder-flask hung at his side, a third had a breast-plate of nine sheets of gray paper, and was armed with a sadler's awl. There was one who shouted: "Let us exterminate to the last, and let us die on the point of our bayonet!" This man had no bayonet. Another displayed over his coat the shoulder-belts and the cartridge-box of a National Guard, with the cartridge-box cover ornamented with this inscription in red worsted: *Public Order.* Many muskets, bearing the numbers of legions, few hats, no neckties, a great many bare arms, a few pikes. Add to this all ages, all faces, small pale youths,

bronzed laborers from the docks. All were in a hurry, and, while assisting each other, talked about the possible chances—that they would have help toward three o'clock in the morning —that they were sure of one regiment—that Paris would rise. Terrible remarks, with which was mingled a sort of cordial joviality. One might have said they were brothers; they did not know one another by name. Great perils have this beauty about them, that they bring to light the fraternity of strangers.

A fire had been lighted in the kitchen, and men were casting in a bullet-mould, bowls, spoons, forks, all the pewter ware of the wine-shop. They drank through all this. Caps and buckshot rolled pell-mell on the table among glasses of wine. In the billiard-room Mame Hucheloup, Matelote, and Gibelotte, variously affected by terror, one being stupefied by it, another breathless, the third awakened, were tearing up old housecloths and making lint; three insurgents helped them, long-haired, bearded, and mustached fellows, who pulled the cloth asunder with the fingers of a linen-draper and who made them tremble.

The man of tall stature whom Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Enjolras had noticed, at the moment when he had joined the band at the corner of the Rue des Billettes, was working

at the small barricade, and making himself useful. Gavroche was working at the large one. As for the young man who had waited for Courfeyrac at his house and had asked him for Monsieur Marius, he had disappeared very nearly at the moment when the omnibus was overturned.

Gavroche, completely carried away and radiant, had charged himself with putting everything in train. He came, went, ascended, descended, went up again, bustled, sparkled. He seemed to be there for the encouragement of all. Had he a spur? Yes, certainly, his misery; had he wings? Yes, certainly, his joy. Gavroche was a whirlwind. He was seen incessantly, he was heard constantly. He filled the air, being everywhere at once. He was a species of almost provoking ubiquity; no delay was possible with him. The enormous barricade felt him on its crupper. He annoyed the idlers, he excited the slothful, he reanimated the fatigued, provoked the thoughtful, kept some in gayety, gave others time to breathe, set some in a passion, all in motion, he piqued a student, was biting to a workman; he took position, halted, started again, flitted above the tumult and the effort, leaped from one to the other, murmured, hummed, and harassed the whole team; the fly of the immense revolutionary coach.

Perpetual movement was in his little arms, and perpetual clamor in his little lungs.

"Cheerly! more paving-stones! more barrels! more vehicles! where are there any? A hod-load of plaster to stop up this hole. It is too small, your barricade. It must be higher. Pile up everything, flank it with everything, brace it with everything. Break up the house. A barricade is Mother Gibou's tea-party. Hold on, here's a glass door."

This made the workmen exclaim:

"A glass door! what would you have us do with a glass door, Tubercle?"

"Hercules yourselves!" retorted Gavroche. "A glass door in a barricade is excellent. It does not prevent them from attacking, but it racks them in taking it. Then you have never prigged apples over a wall with broken bottles on it? A glass door cuts the corns on the feet of the National Guards when they try to climb over the barricade. Pardi! glass is treacherous. Ah, there, you haven't an unbridled imagination, my comrades."

Moreover, he was furious at his pistol without a cock. He went from one to the other, saying: "A gun! I want a gun! Why don't you give me a gun?"

"A gun for you!" said Combeferre.

"Hold on," replied Gavroche, "why

not? I had one in 1830, when we quarreled with Charles X. !"

Enjolras shrugged his shoulders.

"When there are enough for the men, we will give them to the children."

Gavroche turned fiercely, and answered him:

"If you are killed before me I will take yours."

"Gamin !" said Enjolras.

"Beardless boy !" said Gavroche.

A stray dandy who was lounging at the end of the street created a diversion.

Gavroche shouted to him:

"Come with us, young man! Eh! what, this poor old country, won't you do anything for her?"

The dandy fled.

V.

THE PREPARATIONS

The journals of the time which said that the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, that *almost impregnable construction*, as they called it, reached the level of a first-floor, are mistaken. The truth is, that it did not exceed an average height of six or seven feet. It was built in such a manner that the combatants could, at will, either disappear behind it or look over the barrier and even scale the crest of it by means of a quadruple row of paving-stones piled on one another and arranged like steps on the inside. Externally the front of the barricade, composed of piles of paving-stones and of barrels, held together by joists and planks, which were interlocked in the wheels of the Anceau truck and of the overturned omnibus, had a bristling and inextricable appearance. A slit sufficient for a man to pass through was left between the walls of the houses and the extremity of the barricade furthest from the wine-shop, so that a sortie

was possible. The pole of the omnibus was upright and kept in place by ropes, and a red flag, fixed to this pole, floated over the barricade.

The little Barricade Mondétour, concealed behind the wine-shop, could not be perceived. The two barricades combined formed a veritable redoubt. Enjolras and Courfeyrac had not thought proper to barricade the other end of the Rue Mondétour, which opens through the Rue des Prêcheurs an outlet to the markets, doubtless wishing to preserve a possible communication with the outside, and having little fear of being attacked by the dangerous and difficult alley des Prêcheurs.

With the exception of this issue left free, which constituted what Folard in his strategic style would have called a branch-trench, and taking into account also the narrow opening arranged on the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the interior of the barricade, in which the wine-shop made a salient angle, presented an irregular quadrilateral, closed in on all sides. There was a space of twenty paces between the great barrier and the tall houses which formed the end of the street, so that it might be said that the barricade leaned against these houses, all inhabited, but closed from top to bottom.

All this work was done without hindrance, in less than an hour, and without this handful

of bold men having seen a single bearskin-cap or bayonet arise. The few bourgeois who still ventured at this moment of the émeute into the Rue Saint-Denis took a glance into the Rue de la Chanvrerie, perceived the barricade, and doubled their pace.

The two barricades completed, the flag hoisted, a table was dragged out from the wine-shop, and Courfeyrac mounted on the table. Enjolras brought up the square chest, and Courfeyrac opened it. The chest was full of cartridges. When they saw the cartridges there was a shudder among the bravest, a moment of silence.

Courfeyrac distributed them with a smile.

Each received thirty cartridges. Many had powder, and set about making others with the bullets which had been cast. As for the barrel of powder, it was on a separate table, near the door, and was held in reserve.

The beating to arms, which was traversing all Paris, did not cease, but in the end it had become a monotonous noise, to which they no longer paid any attention. This noise sometimes retired, sometimes came nearer, with lugubrious undulations.

The guns and carbines were loaded all together, without precipitation, with a solemn gravity. Enjolras stationed three sentinels outside the barricades, one in the Rue de

la Chanvrerie, the second in the Rue des Prêcheurs, the third at the corner of the Petite-Truanderie.

Then the barricades built, the posts assigned, the guns loaded, the sentries placed, alone in these formidable streets, through which no one now passed, surrounded by dumb and, as it were, dead houses, in which no human movement palpitated, enveloped in the menacing darkness of twilight, which was beginning to fall, in the midst of that obscurity and of that silence in which they felt something advancing, and which had an indescribable something tragic and terrifying about it, isolated, armed, determined, tranquil, they waited.

V

WAITING

In these hours of waiting, what did they do?

We are bound to tell it, because this is history.

While the men were making cartridges and the women lint, while a large stewpan full of melted pewter and lead, intended for the bullet-mould, was smoking over a red-hot chafing-dish, while the vedettes were watching with shouldered arms on the barricade, while Enjolras, whom it was impossible to distract, was watching the vedettes, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, Feuilly, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, a few others besides, sought each other and mustered together, as in the most peaceful days of their student talks, and in a corner of the wine-shop converted into a casemate, at two paces from the redoubt which they had raised, their carbines loaded and primed leaning against the backs of their chairs, these fine young men, so near their

last hour, set themselves to recite love verses.

What verses? Here they are:

Vous rappelez-vous notre douce vie,
Lorsque nous étions si jeunes tous deux,
Et que nous n'avions au cœur d'autre envie
Que d'être bien mis et d'être amoureux!

Lorsqu'en ajoutant votre âge à mon âge,
Nous ne comptions pas à deux quarante ans,
Et que, dans notre humble et petit ménage,
Tout, même l'hiver, nous était printemps!

Beaux jours! Manuel était fier et sage,
Paris s'asseyait à de saints banquets,
Foy lançait la foudre, et votre corsage
Avait une epingle où je me piquais.

Tout vous contemplait. Avocat sans causes,
Quand je vous menais au Prado dîner,
Vous étiez jolie au point que les roses
Me faisaient l'effet de se retourner.

Je les entendais dire: Est-elle belle!
Comme elle sent bon! quels cheveux à flots!
Sous son mantelet elle cache une aile;
Son bonnet charmant est à peine éclos.

J'errais avec toi, pressant ton bras souple.
Les passants croyaient que l'amour charmé
Avait marié, dans notre heureux couple,
Le doux mois d'avril au beau mois de mai.

Nous vivions cachés, contents, porte close,
Dévorant l'amour, bon fruit défendu;
Ma bouche n'avait pas dit une chose
Que déjà ton cœur avait répondu.

La Sorbonne était l'endroit-bucolique
Où je t'adorais du soir au matin.
C'est ainsi qu'une âme amoureuse applique
La carte du Tendre au pays latin.

O place Maubert! O place Dauphine!
Quand, dans le taudis frais et printanier,
Tu tirais ton bas sur ta jambe fine,
Je voyais un astre au fond du grenier.

J'ai fort lu Platon, mais rien ne m'en reste;
Mieux que Malebranche et que Lamennais
Tu me démontrais la bonté céleste
Avec une fleur que tu me donnais.

Je t'obéissais, tu m'étais soumise.
O grenier doré! te lacer! te voir
Aller et venir dès l'aube en chemise,
Mirant ton front jeune à ton vieux miroir!

Et qui donc pourrait perdre la mémoire
De ces temps d'aurore et de firmament,
De rubans, de fleurs, de gaze et de moire,
Où l'amour bégaye un argot charmant?

Nos jardins étaient un pot de tulipe;
Tu masquais la vitre avec un jupon;
Je prenais le bol de terre de pipe,
Et je te donnais la tasse en japon.

Et ces grands malheurs qui nous faisaient rire!
Ton manchon brûlé, ton boa perdu!
Et ce cher portrait du divin Shakspeare
Qu'un soir pour souper nous avons vendu!

J'étais mendiant, et toi charitable.
Je baisais au vol tes bras frais et ronds.
Dante in-folio nous servait de table
Pour manger gaîment un cent de marrons.

Le première fois qu'en mon joyeux bouge
Je pris un baiser à ta lèvre en feu,
Quand tu t'en allas décoiffée et rouge,
Je restai tout pâle et je crus en Dieu.

Te rappelles-tu nos bonheurs sans nombre,
Et tous ces fichus changés en chiffons ?
Oh ! que de soupirs, de nos cœurs pleins d'ombre,
Se sont envolés dans les cieux profonds !

Do you call to mind our life so sweet,
When we both were so young, and our hearts' desire
Was only that love should within them beat,
And that we should appear in dainty attire?

The time when by adding your age to my own
Not quite up to forty our years I could bring,
And a charm round our nest, so cosy, was thrown
Making all, even winter, for us to be spring.

Rare days! when shone Manuel proud and yet wise,
When at festivals holy, sat Paris the gay,
When Foy discharged thunder, and what a surprise
When a pin in your corsage pricked me one day!

On you were all eyes, when at Prado's to dine
With your briefless barrister, once you went:
So pretty were you, 'twas a fancy of mine,
The roses to watch you, all backward bent.

I heard people say: O is she not fair!
There surely are wings 'neath her mantle concealed!
She looks, O so good! what bright wavy hair!
How charming her cap, though but coyly revealed!

I wandered with you and pressed your soft arm,
And the passers-by thought, as we went on our way,

That e'en Love himself had been touched by our charm,
And the sweet month of April had linked to bright May.

We lived hid from others, contented, shut in,
And feasting on love, fruit forbidden but good;
To speak to you scarcely my tongue could begin
Ere your heart had replied to the thought understood.

A garden bucolic the Sorbonne I found,
Where I breathed your sweet praises from eve unto morn;
And the old "Map of Tenderness," on the strange ground
Of the Quartier Latin, again was new-born.

Place Maubert! Place Dauphine! dear places! when you,
In our mean but yet fresh and spring-like abode,
On your finely-formed leg your soft stocking drew,
I saw that a star on the garret-floor glowed.

I had read much of Plato, but little retained;
From you and your gift of a flower, I more
Of the knowledge of goodness celestial obtained,
Than from study of Malebranche and Lamennais's lore.

Your subject was I, and me you obeyed.
Golden garret! your corset to lace! and to see,
As you went to and fro with your toilet half made,
In the dawn, your young face from old glass look on me!

And who could forget those days that have been,
Of sunrises rosy and firmaments clear,
Of ribbons, of flowers, of gauze, of silk sheen,
Where love stammered "argot"; so sweet to the ear?

Our gardens! they were but one tulip-pot;
  Your petticoat served for a window-blind;
A pipe-clay bowl I took to my lot,
  And the Japanese cup to you I assigned.

And what great misfortunes with laughter we met!
  Your mantle was burnt and your boa was lost!
And the portrait of Shakespeare, so cherished, had yet
  To be sold to provide for one supper's cost!

Then I was a beggar, and you were so kind.
  A kiss from your fresh round arms I would take.
In a folio-Dante a table we'd find,
  When of chestnuts, a hundred, a feast we would make.

In my little lodging, the first time I dared
  To kiss your lip fired with love's ardent power,
And you fled, blushing red, hair dishevelled and scared,
  I was pale and in God I believed in that hour.

Do you call to mind our pleasures untold,
  And your neckerchiefs rumpled till rags they were found?
Oh! what sighs, from our hearts that dark shadows now hold,
  Have flown to the heavens, the realm without bound!

The hour, the place, those memories of youth recalled, a few stars which were beginning to glisten in the sky, the funereal repose of these deserted streets, the imminence of the inexorable adventure which was preparing, gave a pathetic charm to these verses murmured in a low voice in the twilight by Jean Prouvaire, who, as we said, was a sweet poet.

Meanwhile they had lighted a lamp on the small barricade, and on the large one, one of those wax torches such as are seen on Shrove Tuesday in front of the vehicles crowded with masks which are going to the Courtille. These torches, we have seen, come from the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

The torch had been placed in a species of cage of paving-stones closed in on three sides to protect it from the wind, and arranged in such fashion that the whole of the light fell upon the flag. The street and the barricade remained plunged in obscurity, and nothing could be seen except the red flag formidably illumined, as if by an enormous dark lantern.

This light added to the scarlet of the flag an indescribable terrible purple.

VII.

THE MAN RECRUITED IN THE RUE DES BILLETTES

Night had quite set in, nothing occurred. There were only confused rumors and at intervals fusillades, but they were rare, poorly sustained and distant. This respite, which was prolonged, was a sign that the government was taking its time and collecting its forces. These fifty men were awaiting sixty thousand.

Enjolras felt himself possessed by that impatience which seizes strong souls on the threshold of formidable events. He went to find Gavroche, who was busy manufacturing some cartridges in the ground-floor room by the doubtful light of two candles, placed on the bar for precaution, on account of the gunpowder sprinkled over the tables. These two candles threw no rays outside. The insurgents moreover had taken care not to allow any light in the upper floors.

Gavroche at this moment was very greatly preoccupied, though not precisely over his cartridges.

The man from the Rue des Billettes had entered the ground-floor room and had taken a seat at the table which was least lighted. A musket of large model had fallen to his lot, which he held between his legs. Gavroche, up to this moment, distracted by a hundred "amusing" things, had not even seen this man.

When he entered, Gavroche mechanically followed him with his eyes, admiring his gun, but, suddenly, when the man was seated the gamin arose. Those who might have watched this man up to this moment would have seen that he observed everything in the barricade, and in the band of insurgents, with singular attention; but since he had entered the room he had fallen into a sort of contemplation, and seemed to see nothing of what was going on. The gamin approached this pensive man, and began to walk round him on tiptoe, as people move round a man whom they are afraid of awaking. At the same time, over his childish face, at once so impudent and so serious, so giddy and so profound, so gay and so heart-breaking, passed all the grimaces of an old man, which expressed: "Ah, bah! it isn't possible! I am blind! I am dreaming! can it be? . . . no, it is not! why, yes! why, no!" etc. Gavroche balanced himself on his heels, clenched both his fists in his

pockets, craned his neck like a bird, expended in one unmeasured pout all the sagacity of a lower lip. He was stupefied, uncertain, incredulous, convinced, dazzled. He had the appearance of the chief of the eunuchs at a slave-market discovering a Venus among the girls, and the air of an amateur recognizing a Raphaël in a pile of daubs. Everything in him was at work, the instinct that scents and the intelligence that combines. It was evident that an event was occurring with Gavroche.

It was in the deepest of this preoccupation that Enjolras accosted him.

"You are little," said Enjolras, "nobody will see you. Go out of the barricades, glide along by the houses, look a little about the streets, and come back to tell me what is going on."

Gavroche drew himself up.

"Little ones are good for something, then! that's lucky! I'm off. In the meanwhile, trust to the little, distrust the big . . . ." And Gavroche, raising his head and lowering his voice, added, pointing to the man of the Rue des Billettes:

"You see that big fellow there!"

"Well?"

"He's a spy."

"Are you sure?"

"It isn't a fortnight since he pulled me

down by the ear from the cornice of the Pont Royal where I was taking the air."

Enjolras hurriedly left the gamin and whispered a few words very low to a laborer from the wine-docks who was present there. The laborer went out of the room and returned almost immediately, accompanied by three others. The four men, four porters with broad shoulders, stationed themselves, without doing anything which could attract his attention, behind the table at which was seated the man of the Rue des Billettes. They were evidently ready to throw themselves upon him.

Then Enjolras approached the man and demanded of him:

"Who are you?"

At this brusque question the man gave a start. He fixed his look straight into the depths of the frank eyes of Enjolras, and appeared to read his thoughts. He smiled with a smile, which was above all things that could be seen in the world the most disdainful, the most energetic, and the most resolute, and answered, with a haughty gravity:

"I see how it is . . . Well, yes!"

"Are you a spy?"

"I am an Agent of the Authority."

"Your name is?"

"Javert."

Enjolras made a sign to the four men. In

the twinkling of an eye, before Javert had had time to turn himself round, he was collared, thrown down, bound, searched.

They found on him a little round card framed between two glasses, and bearing on one side the arms of France, engraved with this motto: *Surveillance and vigilance*, and on the other side this notification: "JAVERT, Inspector of Police, fifty-two years of age," and the signature of the prefect of police of that day, M. Gisquet.

He had also his watch and his purse which contained a few pieces of gold. They left with him the purse and the watch. Under the watch, at the bottom of his fob, they felt and seized a paper in an envelope, which Enjolras unfolded, and on which he read these five lines, written in his own hand by the prefect of police:

"So soon as his political mission is concluded, Inspector Javert will assure himself by a special watch whether it is true that criminals have resorts on the slope of the right bank of the Seine, near the bridge of Jena."

The search terminated, they raised Javert, they tied his arms behind his back, and tied him in the middle of the ground-floor room to the celebrated post, which had formerly given its name to the wine-shop.

Gavroche, who had watched the whole scene and approved of everything by a silent shake of the head, approached to Javert and said to him:

"The mouse has trapped the cat."

All this was executed so rapidly that it was concluded before those outside of the wine-shop were aware of it. Javert had not uttered a cry. On seeing Javert tied to the post, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Joly, Combeferre, and the men scattered about the two barricades, hurried in.

Javert, backed against the post, and so hemmed round with cords that he could not make a movement, raised his head with the intrepid serenity of a man who has never told a lie.

"It is a spy," said Enjolras.

And turning toward Javert:

"You will be shot ten minutes before the barricade is taken."

Javert replied, with his most imperious accent:

"Why not at once?"

"We are economizing powder."

"Then finish it off with a knife."

"Spy," said the handsome Enjolras, "we are judges, and not assassins."

Then he called Gavroche.

"You! go about your business! Do what I told you."

"I am off," cried Gavroche.

And stopping at the moment he was starting:

"By the way, you will give me his gun!" And he added: "I leave you the musician but I want the clarionet."

The gamin gave a military salute, and sprang gayly through the opening in the big barricade.

VIII.

SEVERAL INTERROGATION POINTS ANENT A MAN NAMED LE CABUC WHO PERHAPS WAS NOT NAMED LE CABUC

The tragic picture which we have undertaken would not be complete, the reader would not see in their exact and real relief these great moments of social lying-in and revolutionary giving-birth, where there is convulsion mingled with effort, if we were to omit in the outline sketched here, an incident full of an epic and ferocious horror, which happened almost immediately after the departure of Gavroche.

Riotous mobs, as one knows, are like a snowball, and as they roll agglomerate a heap of tumultuous men. These men do not ask one another whence they come. Among the passers-by who became joined to the mob led by Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac, there was a person wearing a porter's vest, threadbare at the shoulders, who gesticulated

and vociferated, and had the appearance of a species of drunken savage. This man, named or nicknamed Le Cabuc, and moreover entirely unknown to those who pretended to know him, very drunk, or seeming to be so, was seated with some others, at a table which they had dragged out of the wine-shop. This Cabuc, while making the others addle their brain with drink, seemed to be gazing with an air of reflection, at the large house at the end of the barricade, whose five stories commanded the whole street, and faced the Rue Saint-Denis. All at once he cried out:

"Comrades, do you know? it is from that house we must fire. When we are at those windows, devil a one can come up the street!"

"Yes, but the house is closed," said one of the drinkers.

"We'll knock!"

"They won't open."

"We'll break in the door!"

Le Cabuc runs to the door, which had a very massive knocker, and raps. The door does not open. He raps a second time. Nobody answers. A third rap. The same silence.

"Is there anyone here?" cries Le Cabuc.

Nothing stirs.

Then he seizes a musket and begins to batter the door with the butt. It was an old

alley-door, arched, low, narrow, solid, all of oak, lined on the inside with sheet-iron and iron braces, a veritable Bastille postern. The blows from the butt made the house tremble, but did not shake the door.

Nevertheless it is probable that the inhabitants were alarmed, for they at last saw a little square garret window on the third story, light up and open, and there appeared at this garret window a candle and the sanctimonious and alarmed head of an old man with gray hair who was the porter.

The man who was knocking stopped.

"Messieurs," demanded the porter, "what do you want?"

"Open!" said Le Cabuc.

"Messieurs, that cannot be."

"Open, however!"

"Impossible, messieurs!"

Le Cabuc took his gun and aimed at the porter; but as he was below and it was very dark, the porter did not see him.

"Yes or no, will you open?"

"No, messieurs!"

"You say no?"

"I say no, my good . . ."

The porter did not finish. The musket was discharged; the bullet entered under his chin and came out of his neck, after having passed through the jugular. The old man fell in a

heap, without heaving a sigh. The candle fell and was extinguished, and nothing could now be seen but a motionless head lying on the sill of the garret window, and a little whitish smoke ascending to the roof.

"There!" said Le Cabuc, letting fall again on the pavement the butt of his musket.

He had hardly pronounced the word when he felt a hand which was laid on his shoulder with the weight of an eagle's talon, and he heard a voice which said to him:

"On your knees."

The murderer turned, and saw before him the white and cold face of Enjolras. Enjolras had a pistol in his hand.

At the report, he had come up.

He had clutched with his left hand the collar, the blouse, the shirt, and the braces of Cabuc.

"On your knees," repeated he.

And with a sovereign movement the frail young man of twenty years bent like a reed the stocky and robust porter, and forced him to kneel in the mud. Le Cabuc essayed to resist, but he seemed to have been seized by a superhuman hand.

Pale, his neck bare, his hair dishevelled, Enjolras, with his feminine face, had at this moment I know not what of the ancient Themis. His dilated nostrils, his downcast

eyes, gave to his implacable Greek profile that expression of anger and that expression of chastity which, from the point of view of the old world, appertain to justice.

The whole barricade had hurried up, then all ranged themselves in a circle at a distance, feeling that it was impossible to utter a word in the presence of the act they were about to see.

Le Cabuc, conquered, no longer attempted to struggle, and trembled in every limb. Enjolras loosed him and took out his watch.

"Recollect yourself," said he. "Pray or think. You have one minute."

"Pardon!" murmured the murderer; then he hung his head and stammered a few inarticulate oaths.

Enjolras did not take his eyes off the watch; he let the minute pass, then put the watch again in his fob. This done, he seized by the hair Le Cabuc, who writhed against his knees with a howl, and placed the muzzle of the pistol to his ear. Many of these intrepid men, who had so tranquilly entered upon the most frightful of adventures, turned away their heads.

The explosion was heard, the assassin fell on the pavement face forward, and Enjolras drew himself up, and cast around him his determined and severe look.

Then he pushed the corpse away with his foot and said :

" Throw this outside."

Three men raised the body of the wretch, which was still quivering in the last mechanical convulsions of expiring life, and threw it over the small barricade into the alley Mondétour.

Enjolras had remained thoughtful. Some indescribable grand darkness was slowly expanding over his formidable serenity. All at once he raised his voice. There was silence.

" Citizens," said Enjolras, " what that man did is frightful, and what I have done is horrible. He killed, that is why I have killed. I was obliged to do it, for the insurrection must have its discipline. Assassination is even more of a crime here than elsewhere ; we are under the eye of the revolution, we are the priests of the republic, we are the consecrated wafers of duty, and we must take care that no one can calumniate our combat. I, therefore, have judged and condemned this man to death. As for me, constrained to do what I have done, but abhorring it, I have judged myself also, and you shall presently see to what I am myself condemned."

Those who heard trembled.

" We will share your fate," cried Combeferre.

"So be it!" continued Enjolras. "One word more. In executing that man I have obeyed Necessity; but Necessity is a monster of the old world; Necessity is named Fatality. Now, the law of progress is, that monsters disappear before angels, and that Fatality vanishes before Fraternity. It is a bad moment to pronounce the word love. No matter, I pronounce it, I glorify it. Love, thou art the future. Death, I make use of thee, but I hate thee. Citizens, there shall be in the future neither darkness nor thunder-claps, nor ferocious ignorance, nor bloody retaliation. As there will be no longer any Satan, there will be no longer any Michael. In the future no man will kill anyone, the earth shall be radiant, the human race shall love. The day will come, citizens, when all will be concord, harmony, light, joy, and life, it will come. And it is that it may come, that we are about to die."

Enjolras was silent. His virgin lips closed; and he remained for some time standing at the spot where he had shed blood, in the immobility of marble. His fixed eye made all around him talk in whispers.

Jean Prouvaire and Combeferre silently grasped hands, and, leaning against each other in an angle of the barricade, contemplated, with an admiration in which there

was compassion, this grave young man, executioner and priest, luminous as crystal, and of rock at the same time.

Let us say at once, that later, after the action, when the corpses were carried to the morgue and searched, there was found on Le Cabuc a card as of a police-agent. The author of this work had in his hands in 1848 the special report made on this subject to the prefect of police in 1832.

Let us add that, if we may believe a strange but probably well-founded tradition of the police, Le Cabuc was Claquesous. It is a fact that after the death of Cabuc Claquesous was never heard of again. Claquesous left no trace of his disappearance; he seemed to have become amalgamated with the invisible. His life had been darkness, his end was night.

The whole insurgent group was still under the emotion of this tragic trial, so quickly begun and so quickly terminated, when Courfeyrac saw again at the barricade the small young man who in the morning had asked at his house for Marius.

This lad, who had a bold and reckless look, had come at night to rejoin the insurgents.

BOOK THIRTEEN

MARIUS ENTERS THE SHADOW

I.

FROM THE RUE PLUMET TO THE QUARTER OF SAINT-DENIS

That voice which through the twilight had summoned Marius to the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie had produced on him the effect of the voice of destiny. He wished to die, the occasion offered itself; he was knocking at the door of the tomb, a hand in the shadow handed him the key. These lugubrious clefts in the darkness in front of despair are tempting. Marius turned aside the grating which had so often allowed him to pass, left the garden, and said: "Let us go!"

Mad with grief, feeling no longer anything fixed and solid in his brain, incapable of accepting anything henceforth from fate, after these two months spent in the intoxications of youth and of love, crushed by all the reveries of despair at once, he had no longer any wish left, except to make an end of it very quickly.

He began to walk rapidly. It just happened that he was armed, having with him the pistols of Javert.

The young man whom he believed he had seen was lost to his eyes in the street.

Marius, who had left the Rue Plumet by the boulevard, crossed the Esplanade and the bridge of the Invalides, the Champs-Elysées, the Place Louis XV., and reached the Rue de Rivoli. The shops were open there, the gas was burning under the arcades, ladies were buying in the shops, people were taking ices at the Café Laiter, some were eating little cakes at the English pastrycook's. A few post-chaises, however, were setting off at a gallop from the Hotel des Princes and from the Hotel Meurice.

Marius entered through the Passage Delorme into the Rue Saint-Honoré. The shops were closed there, the tradesmen were conversing before their half-open doors, people were moving about, the lamps were lighted, and from the first floor upwards all the windows were lighted as usual. There was some cavalry in the Square of the Palais-Royal.

Marius followed the Rue Saint-Honoré. The farther he got from the Palais-Royal the fewer windows were lighted; the shops were entirely closed, nobody was talking on the thresholds, the street grew dark, and at the

same time the crowd grew dense. For the passers-by had now become a mob. No one could be seen speaking in this crowd, and yet there issued from it a hollow and deep growling.

Toward the Fountain de l'Arbre-Sec there were "gatherings," a species of immobile and sombre groups, which were, among the comers and goers, like stones in the middle of a running stream.

At the entrance of the Rue des Prouvaires, the crowd no longer moved. It was a resisting, massive, solid, compact, almost impenetrable block of persons heaped together who conversed in whispers. There were hardly any black coats or round hats there. Smock-frocks, blouses, caps, bristly and dirty faces. This multitude undulated confusedly in the misty night. Its whispering had the hoarse accent of a rustling. Though no one walked, a tramping in the mud could be heard. Beyond this dense crowd, in the Rue du Roule, in the Rue des Prouvaires, and in the prolongation of the Rue Saint-Honoré, there was not a single window where a candle burnt. In those streets the solitary and decreasing rows of lanterns only could be seen. The street-lanterns of that day resembled large red stars suspended from ropes, and cast on to the pavement a shadow which had

the shape of a large spider. These streets were not deserted. Muskets could be distinguished in stacks, bayonets moving, and troops bivouacking. No curious person passed beyond this limit. Circulation ceased there. The mob finished there, and the army commenced.

Marius wished with the will of a man who no longer hopes. He had been summoned, he was bound to go. He found means to traverse the crowd and to traverse the bivouac of troops, he hid himself from the patrols, he evaded the sentinels. He made a circuit, gained the Rue de Béthisy, and took his course toward the Markets. At the corner of the Rue des Bourdonnais the lanterns ceased.

After having crossed the zone of the mob he passed the extremity of the troops; he found himself in something terrible. Not a passer-by, not a soldier, not a light; nobody. Solitude, silence, night; a strange chill that seized him. To enter a street was to enter a cellar.

He continued to advance.

He took a few steps. Some one passed close by him running. Was it a man? a woman? were there several? He could not have said. It had passed and it had vanished.

By circuit on circuit, he reached a lane,

which he judged to be the Rue de la Poterie; toward the middle of this lane he ran against an obstacle. He stretched out his hands. It was an overturned cart; his feet recognized pools of water, quagmires, paving-stones scattered and piled up. It was a barricade, rough-hewn and abandoned. He clambered over the paving-stones and found himself on the other side of the barrier. He walked very close to the posts, and guided himself by the walls of the houses. A little beyond the barricade it seemed to him he caught a glimpse of something white. He approached, it assumed a form. It was a pair of white horses; the horses of the omnibus unharnessed in the morning by Bossuet, which had wandered, hap-hazard, from street to street all day, and had at last stopped here, with the stolid patience of animals which no more comprehend the actions of man than man comprehends the actions of Providence.

Marius left the horses behind him. As he entered a street which seemed to be the Rue du Contrat-Social, a musket-shot, which came no one could say whence, and which traversed the obscurity at hazard, whizzed close by him, and the ball pierced above his head a copper shaving-dish, suspended before the shop of a hair-dresser. You could still see, in 1846, in the Rue du Contrat-Social, at the corner of

the pillars of the Markets, this shaving-dish with the hole in it.

This musket-shot still was life. From this moment, he encountered nothing further.

The whole itinerary resembled a descent down black steps.

Marius none the less went forward.

II.

AN OWL'S-EYE VIEW OF PARIS

A being who could have soared over Paris at this moment, with the wings of a bat or of an owl, would have had under his eyes a gloomy spectacle.

The entire old Quarter of the Markets, which is like a city within a city, which is traversed by the Rues Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin, where a thousand little streets intersect one another, and of which the insurgents had made their redoubt and their place of arms, would have appeared to him like an enormous black hole dug out in the centre of Paris. There the eye fell into an abyss. Thanks to the broken lamps, thanks to the closed windows, there ceased all brilliancy, all life, all noise, all movement. The invisible police of the émeute were watching everywhere and maintaining order, that is to say, night. To drown the small number in a vast obscurity, to multiply each combatant by the possibilities that this obscurity contains, is the necessary tactics of

the insurrection. At nightfall every window in which a candle gleamed had received a bullet. The light was extinguished, sometimes the inhabitant killed. Hence, nothing stirred. There was nothing there but terror, mourning, stupor in the houses; in the streets a sort of sacred horror. There could be perceived even the long ranges of windows and floors, the indentments of chimneys and of roofs, the vague reflections which glisten on the muddy and damp pavement. The eye which had looked down from above on this mass of shadow might have noticed perhaps here and there, from point to point, indistinct gleams, which brought out broken and grotesque lines, the profiles of singular buildings, something similar to those flashes which go and come through ruins; at such spots were the barricades. The rest was a lake of obscurity, misty, oppressive, funereal, above which arose those motionless and mournful outlines, the Tour Saint-Jacques, the church Saint-Merry, and two or three other of those grand edifices of which man makes giants and of which night makes phantoms.

All around this deserted and unquiet labyrinth, in the quartiers where Parisian circulation was not stopped, and where a few rare lamps glistened, the aërial observer would have distinguished the metallic scintillation of sabres

and of bayonets, the dull rolling of artillery, and the swarming of silent battalions augmenting from moment to moment; a formidable belt, which was slowly contracting and closing in around the émeute.

The invested quartier was now nothing more than a sort of monstrous cavern; everything there seemed asleep or motionless, and, as we have seen, each of the streets by which it could be approached offered nothing but darkness.

A savage darkness full of snares, full of unknown and formidable collisions, into which it was terrifying to penetrate, and horrible to remain, where those who entered shuddered before those who awaited them, where those who awaited trembled before those who were to come. Invisible combatants were intrenched at each corner of the street; sepulchral traps hidden in the thickness of the night. It was finished. No other light could be hoped for there henceforth save the flash of musketry, no other meeting than the sudden and rapid apparition of death. Where? how? when? No one knew, but it was certain and inevitable. There, in that place marked out for the contest, the government and the insurrection, the National Guards and the popular societies, the bourgeoisie and the émeute, were to grope their way. For the one, as for the others,

the necessity was the same. To issue from that place slain or conquerors was the only possible issue henceforth. A situation so extreme, an obscurity so powerful, that the most timid felt themselves filled with resolution and the most hardy with terror.

Moreover, on both sides, fury, obstinacy, equal determination. For these, to advance was to die, and nobody dreamed of retreating; for those, to remain was to die, and nobody dreamed of flying.

It was necessary that on the morrow all should be ended, that the victory should be with one side or the other, that the insurrection should become a revolution or an affray. The government understood this as well as the partisans; the least bourgeois felt it. Hence, a thought of anguish which mingled itself with the impenetrable gloom of this quartier, where all was about to be decided; hence came a redoubling of anxiety around this silence, whence a catastrophe was going to issue. Only one sound could be heard, a sound heart-rending as a death-rattle, menacing as a malediction, the tocsin of Saint-Merry. Nothing could be so chilling as the clamor of this distracting and despairing bell, as it lamented in the darkness.

As often happens, nature seemed to have put herself in accord with what men were

going to do. Nothing deranged the funereal harmonies of the whole scene. The stars had disappeared; heavy clouds filled all the horizon with their melancholy folds. There was a black sky over these dead streets, as if an immense pall were cast over that immense tomb.

Whilst a battle thoroughly political as yet was preparing on the same site which had already seen so many revolutionary events, while the youth, the secret associations, the schools in the name of principles, and the middle classes in the name of interests, were approaching to dash against each other, to close with and to overthrow each other, whilst everybody was hurrying up and appealing to the last and decisive hour of the crisis, in the distance and beyond that fatal quartier, at the lowest depth of the unfathomable cavities of that old miserable Paris, which is disappearing under the splendor of Paris happy and opulent, could be heard hoarsely growling the sombre gloomy voice of the people.

A voice, fearful and sacred, composed of the yell of the brute and of the word of God, which terrifies the feeble and which warns the wise, which at once comes from below like the voice of the lion, and from above like the voice of the thunder.

III.

THE EXTREME LIMIT

Marius had arrived at the Markets.

There all was more calm, more obscure, and even more motionless than in the neighboring streets. It seemed as if the frozen peace of the tomb had issued from the earth and had spread toward the sky.

A ruddy tinge, however, brought out from the black background the tall roofs of the houses which barred the Rue de la Chanvrerie on the side of Saint-Eustache. It was the reflection of the torch which burned on the barricade of Corinth. Marius directed his steps toward that glare. It led him to the Marché-aux-Poirées, and he caught a glimpse of the dark mouth-piece of the Rue des Prêcheurs. He entered it. The sentry of the insurgents who was watching at the other end did not perceive him. He felt himself quite close to what he was seeking, and he walked on tiptoe. He thus reached the elbow of that short piece of the Mondétour

lane which was, as will be remembered, the sole communication preserved by Enjolras with the outside. At the corner of the last house on his left, he put forward his head and peeped into the short piece of Rue Mondétour.

A little beyond the black corner of the lane and of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which formed a large patch of shadow, in which he was himself buried, he perceived a light on the pavement, a portion of the wine-shop, and in the rear a lamp flickering in a sort of shapeless wall, and men crouching down with muskets on their knees. All this was scarce ten yards from him. It was the interior of the barricade.

The houses that lined the right-hand side of the lane hid from him the rest of the wine-shop, the great barricade, and the flag.

Marius had but one step more to take.

Then the unhappy young man sat down on a post, folded his arms, and thought of his father.

He thought of that heroic Colonel Pontmercy, who had been such a proud soldier, who had defended under the republic the frontier of France, and touched under the Emperor the frontier of Asia, who had seen Genoa, Alexandria, Milan, Turin, Madrid, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, Moscow, who had left on all the fields of victory in Europe

drops of the same blood which Marius had in his veins, who had grown gray before his time in discipline and command, who had lived with his sword-belt buckled, his epaulettes falling on his chest, his cockade blackened by powder, his brow wrinkled by his helmet, in the barracks, in the camp, in the bivouac, in the ambulance, and who, at the end of twenty years, had returned from the great wars with his cheek scarred, his face smiling, simple, tranquil, admirable, pure as an infant, having done everything for France, and nothing against her.

He said to himself that his day had come to him also, that his hour had at last struck, that after his father he too was going to be brave, intrepid, bold, to run to meet bullets, to offer his chest to bayonets, to shed his blood, to seek the enemy, to seek death, that he was going to wage war in his turn and to descend into the field of battle, and that the field of battle into which he was going to descend was the street, and that this war he was about to wage was civil war!

He saw civil war opening like a gulf before him, and that he was going to fall into it.

Then he shuddered.

He thought of that sword of his father which his grandfather had sold to a second-hand broker, and which he had so painfully

regretted. He said to himself, that it was well, that this valiant and chaste sword had escaped from him and had disappeared angrily in the darkness; that if it had fled away thus, it was because it was intelligent, and that it had foreseen the future; because it had foreboded the émeute, the war of the gutters, the war of the paving-stones, the fusillades from cellar-traps, the blows dealt and received from behind; because, coming from Marengo and from Friedland, it was unwilling to go to the Rue de la Chanvrerie, because, after what it had done with the father it would not do this with the son! He said to himself that if that sword were there, if, having received it at the bedside of his dead father, he had dared to take it, and carry it into this nocturnal combat between Frenchmen at the street corners, it would assuredly have burned his hands, and have flashed before him like the sword of the angel! He said to himself that it was fortunate it was not there, and that it had disappeared, that this was well, that this was just, that his grandfather had been the true guardian of the glory of his father, and that it was better that the colonel's sword had been cried at auction, sold to a broker, thrown among old iron, than that it should come to-day to make the flank of the country bleed.

And then he began to weep bitterly.

It was horrible. But what was he to do? To live without Cosette he could not. Since she had departed all left him was to die. Had he not given her his word of honor that he would die? She had gone away knowing this; it pleased her therefore that Marius should die. And then it was clear that she loved him no more, because she had gone away thus without warning him, without a word, without a letter, and she knew his address! Of what use was it to live and wherefore should he live now? And then, indeed! to have come so far and to recoil! to have approached the danger and run away! to have come to look at the barricade and slink off! to slink off, trembling, and saying: "In fact, I have had enough of this, I have seen it, that is sufficient, this is civil war, I am off!" To abandon his friends who expected him! who perhaps had need of him! who were a handful against an army! To be false to everything at once, to love, to friendship, to his word! To give his poltroonery the pretext of patriotism! But this was impossible, and if the phantom of his father was there in the shadow, and saw him recoil, it would strike him on his loins with the flat of its sabre, and cry to him: "Forward, coward!"

A prey to this oscillation of his thoughts, he hung his head.

All at once he straightened himself up. A sort of splendid rectification made itself apparent in his mind. There is a dilatation of thought proper to the vicinity of the tomb; to be near death makes a man see the truth. The vision of the action upon which he saw himself perhaps on the point of entering no longer appeared to him lamentable, but superb. The war of the street became suddenly transfigured by some mysterious internal labor of the soul before the eye of his thought. All the tumultuous interrogation points of reverie crowded back upon him, but without troubling him. He did not leave one unanswered.

Let us see, why should his father be indignant? are there not cases in which insurrection attains to the dignity of duty? what was there belittling for the son of Colonel Pontmercy in the combat in which he would engage? It is no longer Montmirail nor Champaubert; it is something else. It is no longer a question of a sacred territory, but of a holy idea. The country complains, so be it; but humanity applauds. Is it true, besides, that the country complains? France bleeds, but liberty smiles; and on seeing the smile of liberty, France forgets her wound. And then, looking at these things from a higher point still, what did people mean by talking of civil war?

Civil war? what does that mean? Is there such a thing as a foreign war? Is not every war between men, war between brothers? War can only be qualified by its aim. There is neither foreign war nor civil war; there is only unjust war and just war. Up to the day when the great human concordat shall be concluded, war, at least that which is the effort of the hurrying future against the laggard past, may perhaps be necessary. What reproach can be brought against such a war? War does not become a disgrace, the sword does not become a dagger, until it assassinates right, progress, reason, civilization, truth. Then, civil war or foreign war, it is iniquitous; its name is crime. Outside of that holy thing justice, by what right does one form of war despise another? by what right does the sword of Washington disown the pike of Camille Desmoulins? Leonidas against the foreigner, Timoleon against the tyrant, which is the greater? one is the defender, the other is the liberator. Shall we brand, without investigating the aim, every taking up of arms in the interior of a city? then, mark with infamy Brutus, Marcel, Arnould of Blankenheim, Coligny. A war of the thickets? a war of the streets? Why not? such was the war of Ambiorix, of Artevelde, of Marnix, of Pelagius. But Ambiorix struggled against

Rome, Artevelde against France, Marnix against Spain, Pelagius against the Moors; all against the foreigner. Well, monarchy is the foreigner; oppression is the foreigner; divine right is the foreigner. Despotism violates the moral frontier as invasion violates the geographical frontier. To drive out the tyrant or to drive out the English is, in either case, to retake your territory. There comes an hour when to protest no longer suffices; after philosophy there must be action; living strength completes what the idea has sketched out; *Prometheus Bound* begins, Aristogiton completes; the *Encyclopédie* enlightens minds, the 10th of August electrifies them. After Æschylus, Thrasybulus; after Diderot, Danton. Multitudes have a tendency to accept a master. Their mass deposits apathy. A crowd easily "totalizes" itself into obedience. Men must be stirred up, pushed, roughly treated by the very blessing of their deliverance, their eyes be hurt by the truth, light be hurled at them in terrible handfuls. They must themselves be to some extent thunderstruck for their own safety; such a dazzling awakes them. Hence the necessity for tocsins and for wars. It is necessary that great combatants should rise, illuminate the nations by audacity, and shake free that sad humanity which is covered over by the shadow of divine

right, Cæsarian glory, strength, fanaticism, irresponsible power, and absolute majesties; a mob stupidly occupied in contemplating in their crepuscular splendor these sombre triumphs of the night. Down with the tyrant! But what? of whom are you speaking? do you call Louis-Philippe the tyrant? No; no more than Louis XVI. These are both what history is accustomed to call good kings; but principles cannot be broken up, the logic of truth is rectilinear, it is the property of truth to be deficient in complaisance; no concession then; every encroachment on man ought to be repressed; there is the right divine in Louis XVI., there is the "because a Bourbon" in Louis-Philippe; both represent to a certain extent the confiscation of right, and to sweep away universal usurpation they must be combated; it must be so, France being always the one who begins. When the master falls in France he falls everywhere. In sum, to re-establish social truth, to give back its throne to liberty, to give back the people to the people, to give back the sovereignty to man, to replace the purple on the head of France, to restore in their plenitude reason and equity, to suppress every germ of antagonism by restoring every man to himself, to annihilate the obstacle which royalty offers to the immense human concord, to place

the human race once again on a level with right, what cause more just, and, in consequence, what war more great? These wars construct peace. An enormous fortress of prejudices, of privileges, of superstitions, of falsehoods, of exactions, of abuses, of violences, of iniquities, of darknesses, is still standing on the earth with its towers of hatred. It must be thrown down. This monstrous mass must be made to crumble away. To conquer at Austerlitz is great, to take the Bastille is immense.

There is nobody who has not remarked it in himself, that the soul—and this is the marvel of its unity complicated with ubiquity—has the strange aptitude of reasoning almost coldly in the most violent extremities, and it often happens that desolate passion and profound despair, in the very agony of their blackest monologues, handle subjects and discuss theses. Logic is mingled with convulsion, and the thread of a syllogism runs without breaking through the lugubrious storm of thoughts. Such was the state of mind of Marius.

While thinking thus, crushed, but resolute, hesitating, however, and, in sum, shuddering at what he was going to do, his gaze wandered into the interior of the barricade. The insurgents were conversing in whispers, without

moving, and that quasi-silence was perceptible which marks the last phase of expectation. Above them, at a third-floor window, Marius distinguished a sort of spectator or of witness who seemed to him singularly attentive. It was the porter killed by Le Cabuc. From below in the reflection of the torch burning on the pavement this head could be vaguely seen. Nothing was more strange in this sombre and uncertain light than this livid face, immobile, astonished, with its bristling hair, its open and fixed eyes and gaping mouth, bending over the street in an attitude of curiosity.

One might have said that he who was dead was contemplating those who were going to die. A long stream of blood which had flowed from his head, descended in ruddy streaks from the window to the height of the first story, where it stopped.

BOOK FOURTEEN

THE GRANDEURS OF DESPAIR

Nothing came yet. Ten o'clock had struck by Saint-Merry's. Enjolras and Combeferre were seated, carbine in hand, near the opening of the great barricade. They did not speak; they were listening, trying to catch even the dullest and the most distant sound of marching.

Suddenly, in the midst of this lugubrious calm, a voice, clear, young, gay, which seemed to come from the Rue Saint-Denis, burst forth, and began to sing distinctly, to the old popular air *Au clair de la lune*, these lines, terminating in a sort of cry that resembled a cock-crow:

"Mon nez est en larmes,
Mon ami Bugeaud,
Prêt'-moi tes gendarmes
Pour leur dire un mot.
En capote bleue,
La poule au shako,
Voici la banlieue!
Co-Co-Corico!"

(" My nose is in tears,
So, Bugeaud my friend,
Lend your gendarmes, all ears
To my speech to attend.
The blue coats that draw near,
And the plumed shakos show,
That the suburbs are here,
Co-Co-Corico.")

They grasped each other by the hand.

" It is Gavroche," said Enjolras.

" He is warning us," said Combeferre.

A headlong run disturbed the deserted streets, and a being more active than a clown was seen to climb over the omnibus, and Gavroche bounded into the barricade, all breathless, saying :

" My musket ! Here they are."

An electric shudder ran along the whole barricade, and the movement of hands seeking muskets was heard.

" Will you have my carbine ? " said Enjolras to the gamin.

" I want the big musket," answered Gavroche.

And he took Javert's musket.

Two sentinels had been driven back and came in almost at the same time as Gavroche. They were the sentinel from the end of the street and the vedette from the Petite-Truanderie. The vedette in the lane des Prêcheurs

remained at his post, which indicated that nothing was coming from the direction of the bridges and the Markets.

The Rue de la Chanvrerie, in which a few paving-stones were scarcely visible in the reflection of the light which was cast on the flag, offered to the insurgents the aspect of a large black porch vaguely opening into a cloud of smoke.

Every man proceeded to his post of combat.

Forty-three insurgents, among whom were Enjolras, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, and Gavroche, were kneeling behind the great barricade, their heads even with the crest of the barrier, the muzzles of their muskets and carbines pointed over the paving-stones as through loop-holes, attentive, silent, ready to fire. Six, commanded by Feuilly, installed themselves, with muskets shouldered, at the windows of the upper stories of Corinth.

Some minutes more elapsed, then a noise of steps, measured, heavy, numerous, was distinctly heard from the direction of Saint-Leu. This noise, at first feeble, then precise, then heavy and sonorous, approached slowly, without halt, without interruption, with a continuity tranquil and terrible. Nothing was audible but this. It was at once the silence and the noise of the statue of the commendatore, but this footfall of stone had something indescribably enormous and multiple about it

which aroused the idea of a multitude at the same time as the idea of a spectre. You might have fancied that you heard the fearful statue Legion on the march. The tramp approached; it approached nearer still, and stopped. It seemed that one could hear at the end of the street the breathing of many men. Nothing, however, could be seen, only there were distinguishable quite at the end, in the dense obscurity, a multitude of metallic threads, fine as needles and almost imperceptible, which moved about like that indescribable phosphoric net-work which we perceive, just at the moment when we are falling asleep, under our closed eyelids, in the first mists of slumber. These were bayonets and musket barrels confusedly glittering in the distant reflection of the torch.

There was another pause, as if on both sides they were awaiting. All at once out of the depth of that darkness, a voice, the more sinister because no one could be seen, and which seemed as if the obscurity itself was speaking, cried:

"Who goes there?"

At the same time could be heard the click of muskets being cocked.

Enjolras replied with a sonorous and haughty accent:

"The French Revolution."

"Fire!" said the voice.

A flash empurpled all the façades of the street, as if the door of a furnace had been suddenly opened and suddenly closed.

A frightful explosion burst over the barricade. The red flag fell. The discharge had been so violent and so dense that it had severed the staff; that is to say, the extreme point of the pole of the omnibus. Some balls, which ricocheted from the cornices of the houses, penetrated the barricade and wounded several men.

The impression of this first discharge was freezing. The attack was impetuous, and of a nature to make the boldest think. It was plain that they had, at least, to deal with a whole regiment.

"Comrades," cried Courfeyrac, "let us not waste our powder. Let us wait to reply till they have entered the street."

"And before all," said Enjolras, "let us hoist the flag again!"

He picked up the flag which had fallen exactly at his feet.

They heard outside the ring of ramrods in the muskets; the troops were reloading their arms.

Enjolras continued:

"Who is there who has the pluck? who will replant the flag on the barricade?"

Not one replied. To mount the barricade at this moment, when all the guns were doubtless aimed at it anew, was simply death. The bravest man hesitates to condemn himself. Enjolras himself felt a shudder. He repeated:

"Will no one offer?"

II.

THE FLAG:—SECOND ACT

Since they had arrived at Corinth and they had begun to construct the barricade hardly any further attention had been paid to Father Mabeuf. M. Mabeuf, however, had not quitted the mob. He had gone into the ground-floor room of the wine-shop and had seated himself behind the bar. There he was, so to speak, annihilated in himself. He seemed no longer to watch and no longer to think. Courfeyrac and others had two or three times accosted him, warning him of the peril, begging him to withdraw, without his appearing to hear them. When no one was speaking to him his lips moved as if he were answering some one, and so soon as people addressed him his lips became immovable, and his eyes no longer had an air of life. A few hours before the barricade was attacked he had assumed a posture which he had not quitted since, his two hands upon his two knees, and his head bent forward, as if he were looking into a precipice. Nothing could

have drawn him out of this attitude; it did not appear as if his spirit was in the barricade. When everyone else had gone to take his post of combat, there only remained in the basement room Javert tied to the post, an insurgent with drawn sabre watching over Javert, and himself, Mabeuf. At the moment of the attack, at the detonation, the physical shock affected and as it were awoke him, he raised himself up abruptly, crossed the room, and at the moment when Enjolras repeated his appeal, "Will no one offer?" the old man was seen on the threshold of the wine-shop.

His presence produced a sort of commotion in the groups. A cry was raised:

"It is the voter! it is the conventionalist! it is the representative of the people!"

It is probable that he did not hear it.

He walked straight to Enjolras, the insurgents making way for him with a religious fear, he tore the flag from Enjolras, who recoiled petrified, and then, no one daring to arrest or to help him, this old man of eighty years, with shaking head, but firm foot, slowly began to ascend the staircase of paving-stones formed inside the barricade. It was so gloomy and so grand that all around him cried: "Hats off!" With each step he ascended, it became frightful, his white hair, his decrepit face, his tall, bald, and wrinkled forehead, his hollow

eyes, his amazed and open mouth, his old arm raising the red banner, surged up out of the darkness and were aggrandized in the bloody light of the torch, and they seemed to see the spectre of '93 issuing from the earth, the flag of terror in its hand.

When he was on the top of the last step, when this phantom, trembling and terrible, standing on the pile of ruins, in the presence of twelve hundred invisible muskets, rose up, in the face of death, and as if stronger than it, the whole barricade assumed a supernatural and colossal aspect in the darkness.

There was one of those silences which occur only in the presence of prodigies.

In the midst of the silence the old man brandished the red flag and cried:

"Long live the revolution! long live the republic! fraternity! equality! and death!"

Those in the barricade heard a low quick talking, like the murmuring of a hurried priest dispatching a prayer. It was probably the commissary of police making the legal summons at the other end of the street.

Then the same loud voice which had cried: "who goes there?" cried:

"Withdraw!"

M. Mabeuf, livid, haggard, his eyeballs illuminated by the lugubrious flames of insanity, raised the flag above his head and repeated:

"Long live the republic!"

"Fire!" said the voice.

A second discharge, like a round of grape-shot, burst against the barricade.

The old man sank on his knees, then drew himself up, let the flag drop, and fell backwards upon the pavement within, like a log, at full length and his arms crossed over his breast.

Streams of blood flowed under him. His aged face, pale and sad, seemed to be gazing at heaven.

One of those emotions superior to man, which makes him even forget to defend himself, seized on the insurgents, and they approached the corpse with a respectful dismay.

"What men these regicides are!" said Enjolras.

Courfeyrac whispered in the ear of Enjolras:

"This is only for you, and I do not wish to diminish the enthusiasm. But this man was anything but a regicide. I knew him. He was called Father Mabeuf. I do not know what was the matter with him to-day. But he was a brave blockhead. Look at his head."

"The head of a blockhead and the heart of Brutus," replied Enjolras.

Then he raised his voice:

"Citizens! this is the example that the old give to the young. We hesitated, he came! we recoiled, he advanced! This is what those who tremble with old age teach those who tremble with fear! This patriarch is august before his country. He has had a long life and a magnificent death! Now let us shield this corpse, let each of us defend this dead old man as he would defend his living father, and let his presence in the midst of us render the barricade impregnable."

A murmur of gloomy but energetic adhesion followed these words.

Enjolras bent down, raised the head of the old man, and stern, he kissed his forehead, then, stretching out his arms and handling the dead man with tender caution, as if afraid of hurting him, he took off from him his coat, showing to all the blood-stained holes, and said:

"There, now, is our flag."

III.

GAVROCHE WOULD HAVE DONE BETTER TO ACCEPT THE CARBINE OF ENJOLRAS

They threw over Father Mabeuf a long black shawl of the widow Hucheloup. Six men made of their muskets a litter, on it they placed the corpse, and that they carried, heads bared, with a solemn slowness, to a large table in the ground-floor room.

These men, entirely engaged with the grave and sacred thing they were doing, no longer thought of the perilous situation in which they themselves were.

When the corpse passed near to Javert, wholly impassible, Enjolras said to the spy:

"You! directly."

During this time the little Gavroche, who alone had not left his post, and had remained on the watch, believed that he saw some men approaching the barricade stealthily. All at once he cried:

"Look out!"

Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Jean Prouvaire, Combeferre, Joly, Bahorel, Bossuet, all hurried tumultuously out of the wine-shop. There was barely time. They perceived a sparkling depth of bayonets undulating on the crest of the barricade. Municipal Guards of tall stature were penetrating, some by striding over the omnibus, others by the opening, driving before them the gamin, who fell back, but did not fly.

The moment was critical. It was that first formidable moment of inundation when the river rises to the level of the dam and the water begins to filter through the fissures of the dyke. One second more and the barricade had been taken.

Bahorel threw himself upon the first Municipal Guard who entered, and killed him at the very muzzle of his carbine; the second killed Bahorel with a bayonet-thrust. Another had already prostrated Courfeyrac, who was crying: "Help!" The tallest of them all, a species of Colossus, was marching upon Gavroche, with fixed bayonet. The gamin raised in his little arms the enormous musket of Javert, resolutely aimed at the giant, and pulled the trigger. Nothing went off. Javert had not loaded his musket. The Municipal Guard burst into a laugh, and raised his bayonet over the child.

Before the bayonet had touched Gavroche, the musket fell from the hands of the soldier, a ball had struck the Municipal Guard in the middle of the forehead, and he fell upon his back. A second ball struck in the middle of his chest the other guard who had assailed Courfeyrac, and threw him upon the pavement.

It was Marius who had just entered the barricade.

IV.

THE BARREL OF POWDER

Marius, still concealed in the corner of the Rue Mondétour, had watched the first phase of the combat irresolute and trembling. However, he was not able to resist for long that mysterious and sovereign vertigo which may be called the appeal from the abyss. Before the immensity of the peril, before the death of M. Mabeuf, that funereal enigma, before Bahorel killed, Courfeyrac crying: "help!" this child menaced, his friends to succor or avenge, all hesitation vanished, and he rushed into the fray, his two pistols in hand. With the first shot he had saved Gavroche, and with the second delivered Courfeyrac.

At the shots, at the cries of the wounded guards, the assailants clambered up the intrenchment, over the crest of which could now be seen more than half of the bodies of crowding Municipal Guards, soldiers of the line, National Guards from the suburbs, musket in hand. They covered already more than

two-thirds of the barricade, but they no longer leaped down into the enclosure, as if they were hesitating, fearing some snare. They looked down into the obscure barricade as they would have peered into a den of lions. The light of the torch only illuminated their bayonets, their bearskin shakos, and the upper part of their anxious and irritated faces.

Marius had no more arms, he had thrown away his discharged pistols, but he had noticed the barrel of gunpowder in the basement-room near the door.

As he half turned round to look in that direction a soldier aimed at him. At the moment when the soldier aimed at Marius, a hand was laid on the muzzle of his musket and stopped it up. It was somebody who had sprung forward, a young workman in velvet pantaloons. The shot was fired, passed through the hand, and probably also the workman, for he fell, but the ball did not hit Marius. All this, in the smoke, was rather guessed than seen. Marius, who was entering the lower basement, hardly noticed this. Still he had confusedly seen the gun pointed at him, and that hand which had stopped it, and he had heard the explosion. But in minutes like this things that men see vacillate and rush headlong, and men stop at nothing. They feel themselves obscurely

impelled toward deeper shadow still, and all is mist.

The insurgents, surprised but not terrified, had rallied. Enjolras had cried: "Wait! do not fire at hazard!" In the first confusion in fact they might wound one another. The majority had gone up to the window of the first story, and to the dormer windows, whence they dominated the assailants. The more determined, with Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, and Combeferre, were haughtily standing with their backs against the houses at the end, unprotected, and facing the lines of soldiers and guards who crowned the barricade.

All this was done without precipitation, with that strange and menacing gravity which precedes a combat. On both sides they were taking aim at each other within point-blank range, they were so near that they could converse without raising their voices. When they were at the point where the spark was about to shoot forth, an officer wearing a gorget and heavy epaulettes stretched out his sword and said:

"Take aim!"

"Fire!" said Enjolras.

The two detonations took place at the same moment, and everything disappeared in smoke.

An acrid and stifling smoke, in which writhed, with faint and hollow groans, the dying and the wounded.

When the smoke was dispersed, the two lines of combatants could be seen, thinned, but still at the same spot, reloading their arms in silence.

All at once was heard a thundering voice which cried:

"Begone, or I'll blow up the barricade!"

All turned to the side whence came the voice.

Marius had entered the basement-room and had taken the barrel of powder, then he had profited by the smoke and sort of obscure mist which filled the intrenched space, to glide along the barricade up to the cage of paving-stones in which the torch was fixed. To tear out the torch, to place in its stead the barrel of powder, to throw down the pile of paving-stones upon the barrel, which became at once unheaded with a sort of terrible obedience, all this had only occupied Marius so much time as stooping down and rising up again; and now all, National Guards, Municipal Guards, officers, soldiers, collected at the other end of the barricade, gazed at him in stupor, his foot on the paving-stones, the torch in his hand, his stern face lighted up by a fatal resolution, bending the flame of the torch toward that formidable heap, in which the broken barrel

of powder could be distinguished, and uttering the terrifying cry :

" Begone, or I'll blow up the barricade !"

Marius, upon this barricade after the octogenarian, was the vision of the young revolution after the apparition of the old.

" Blow up the barricade ! " said a sergeant, " and yourself also ! "

Marius answered :

"And myself also ! "

And he bent the torch toward the barrel of powder.

But there was no one left on the barricade. The assailants, leaving their dead and their wounded, fell back pell-mell and in disorder toward the extremity of the street, and were lost again in the night. It was a complete rout.

The barricade was saved.

V.

END OF THE VERSES OF JEAN PROUVAIRE

All surrounded Marius. Courfeyrac fell on his neck.

"You here!"

"What happiness!" said Combeferre.

"You came in the nick of time!" said Bossuet.

"Without you I had been dead!" remarked Courfeyrac.

"Without you I had been gobbled!" added Gavroche.

Marius demanded:

"Where is the chief?"

"You are chief," said Enjolras.

Marius had had the whole day through a furnace in his brain, now it was a tornado. This tornado which was in him produced on him the effect of being outside of himself and of carrying him away. It seemed to him as if he were already an immense distance from life. His two luminous months of joy and love suddenly terminated at this frightful precipice,

Cosette lost to him, this barricade, M. Mabeuf letting himself be killed for the republic, himself a chief of the insurgents, all these things seemed to him a monstrous nightmare. He was obliged to make a mental effort to remind himself that all which surrounded him was real. Marius had not lived long enough yet to know that nothing is so imminent as the impossible, and that what must be always foreseen is the unforeseen. He was a spectator of his own drama, as if it were a piece of which he comprehended nothing.

In this fog in which his mind was wrapped, he did not recognize Javert, who, fastened to his post, had not made a movement of his head during the attack on the barricade, and who watched the revolt buzzing round him with the resignation of a martyr and the majesty of a judge. Marius did not even perceive him.

Meanwhile, the assailants no longer stirred, they could be heard marching and swarming at the end of the street, but they did not venture forward, may-be that they were waiting for orders, may-be that before rushing again upon this impregnable redoubt they desired reinforcements. The insurgents had posted sentries, and some who were students in medicine had begun to dress the wounded.

They had thrown the tables out of the wine-shop, with the exception of the two tables

reserved for the lint and the cartridges, and the table on which lay Father Mabeuf; they had added them to the barricade, and had replaced them in the basement-room by the mattresses off the beds of the Widow Hucheloup and of the servant-girls. Upon these mattresses they laid the wounded. As for the three poor creatures who lived in Corinth, no one knew what had become of them. They were found at length hidden in the cellar.

A poignant emotion came to darken the joy of the liberated barricade.

The roll call was made, one of the insurgents was missing. And who? One of the dearest, one of the most valiant, Jean Prouvaire. They sought for him among the wounded, he was not there. They sought for him among the dead, he was not there. He was evidently a prisoner.

Combeferre said to Enjolras:

"They have our friend; we have their agent. Do you care for the death of this spy?"

"Yes," replied Enjolras, "but less than for the life of Jean Prouvaire."

This was said in the basement-room close to the post of Javert.

"Well," continued Combeferre, "I am going to fasten my handkerchief to my cane, and go as a flag of truce to offer to give them their man for ours."

"Listen," said Enjolras, laying his hand on the arm of Combeferre.

There was a significant clicking of arms at the end of the street.

They heard a manly voice cry:

"Long live France! long live the future."

They recognized the voice of Prouvaire.

A flash passed and a detonation burst forth.

The silence returned.

"They have killed him," cried Combeferre.

Enjolras looked at Javert and said to him:

"Your friends have just shot you."

VI.

THE AGONY OF DEATH AFTER THE AGONY OF LIFE

A singularity of this sort of war, is that the attack on barricades is almost always made in the front, and that in general the assailants abstain from turning the positions, either because they dread ambuscades, or because they are afraid to engage in tortuous streets. The whole attention of the insurgents was, consequently, directed to the great barricade, which was evidently the constantly threatened point, and where infallibly the contest would recommence. Marius, however, thought of the little barricade, and went to it. It was deserted, and was not guarded except by the lamp which flickered among the paving-stones. However, the Mondétour lane and the branch streets of the Petite-Truanderie and du Cygne were profoundly quiet.

As Marius, after making his inspection, was retiring, he heard his name feebly uttered in the obscurity :

"Monsieur Marius !"

He shuddered, for he recognized the voice which had called him two hours before through the grating in the Rue Plumet.

Only this voice now seemed to be but a breath.

He looked around him and saw no one.

Marius fancied he was mistaken, and that it was an illusion added by his spirit to the extraordinary realities which were pressing around him. He took a step to leave the remote angle in which the barricade was placed.

"Monsieur Marius!" repeated the voice.

This time he could not doubt, for he had heard distinctly; he looked and saw nothing.

"At your feet," said the voice.

He stooped down, and saw in the shadow a form which was dragging itself toward him. It was crawling along the pavement. It was this that had spoken to him.

The lamp permitted him to distinguish a blouse, pantaloons of torn, coarse velvet, bare feet, and something that resembled a pool of blood. Marius also caught a glimpse of a pale face, which raised itself toward him, and which said to him:

"You do not recognize me?"

"No."

"Eponine."

Marius eagerly stooped down. It was in fact that hapless girl. She was dressed as a man.

"How came you here? what are you doing here?"

"I am dying," said she to him.

There are words and incidents that wake up beings that are crushed. Marius cried with a start:

"You are wounded! Wait, I will carry you into the room. Your wound shall be dressed. Is it serious? how shall I catch hold of you so as not to hurt you? where do you suffer? Help! my God! But what did you come to do here?"

And he essayed to pass his arm under her to lift her.

In lifting her he touched her hand.

She uttered a feeble cry.

"Have I hurt you?" demanded Marius.

"A little."

"But I only touched your hand."

She raised her hand into the sight of Marius, and Marius in the middle of that hand saw a black hole.

"What is the matter with your hand?" said he.

"It is pierced."

"Pierced!"

"Yes."

"By what?"

"By a ball."

"How?"

"Did you see a musket aimed at you?"

"Yes, and a hand which stopped it up."

"It was mine."

Marius shuddered:

"What madness! Poor child! But all the better, if that is your wound, it is nothing. Let me carry you to a bed. Your wound shall be dressed, people do not die of a pierced hand."

She murmured:

"The ball passed through my hand but it came out of my back. It is useless to take me from here. I will tell you how you can dress my wound better than a surgeon. Sit down near me on that stone."

He obeyed; she laid her head on the knees of Marius, and, without looking at him, she said:

"Oh! that is good! How comforting it is! There! I do not suffer any more."

She remained for a moment in silence, then she turned her head with an effort, and gazed at Marius.

"Do you know, Monsieur Marius? It worried me that you should go into that garden, it was foolish of me, since it was I who showed you the house, and then, indeed, I ought to have known that a young man like you . . ."

She broke off, and leaping over the sombre transitions which were without doubt in her mind, she added with a heart-rending smile:

"You thought me ugly, did you not?"

She continued:

"See, you are lost! Now no one will get out of the barricade. It was I who brought you here, hold! You are going to die, I feel sure. And still when I saw that he aimed at you, I laid my hand on the muzzle of his musket. How droll it is! But it was because I wished to die before you. When I had received that ball I dragged myself here, no one saw me, no one picked me up. I waited for you, I said: 'He will not come then?' Oh! if you knew, I bit my blouse, I was suffering so much! Now I am well. Do you remember the day when I came into your room and when I looked at myself in your mirror, and the day when I met you on the boulevard near some workwomen? How the birds sang! It is not so very long ago. You gave me a hundred sous, and I said to you: 'I do not want your money.' Did you pick up your piece at all? You are not rich. I did not think to tell you to pick it up. The sun was shining, it was not at all cold. Do you remember, Monsieur Marius? Oh! I am happy! Everybody is going to die."

She had an air, wild, grave, and heart-rending. Her ragged blouse displayed her naked throat. While speaking she rested her pierced hand on her breast, where there was another hole, and whence every moment a flow of blood spurted like a jet of wine from an open bung.

Marius gazed at this unfortunate creature with profound compassion.

"Oh!" continued she suddenly, "it is coming back. I choke!"

She raised her blouse and bit it, and her legs writhed on the pavement.

At this moment the crowing voice of the little Gavroche could be heard in the barricade. The lad had mounted upon a table to load his musket and was gaily singing the song then so popular:

"En voyant Lafayette,
Le gendarme répète:
Sauvons-nous! sauvons-nous! sauvons-nous!"

("Lafayette meets his eyes,
And the gendarme outcries,
Save we! Save we! Save we ourselves!")

Eponine raised herself and listened, then she murmured:

"It is he."

And turning toward Marius:

"My brother is here. He must not see me. He would scold me."

"Your brother!" demanded Marius, as he thought most bitterly and dolorously in his heart of the duties which his father had bequeathed him toward the Thénardiers, "which is your brother?"

"That little one."

"The one who is singing?"

"Yes."

Marius made a move.

"Oh! do not go away!" said she, "it will not be long now!"

She was almost sitting up, but her voice was very low and broken by hiccoughs. At intervals the death-rattle interrupted her. She put her face as near as she could to the face of Marius. She added with a strange expression:

"Come, I do not wish to play you a trick. I have in my pocket a letter for you. Since yesterday. I was told to put it in the post. I kept it. I did not wish it to reach you. But, perhaps, you will not be angry with me when we meet again directly. We are going to meet again, are we not? Take your letter."

She seized convulsively the hand of Marius with her wounded hand, but she seemed no longer to feel the suffering. She placed the hand of Marius in the pocket of her blouse. Marius really felt a paper there.

"Take it," said she.

Marius took the letter.

She made a sign of satisfaction and of contentment.

"Now, for my trouble, promise me . . . "

And she stopped.

"What?" demanded Marius.

"Promise me!"

"I promise you."

"Promise me to give me a kiss on the forehead when I am dead.—I shall feel it."

She let her head fall again on the knees of Marius and her eyelids closed. He believed the poor soul had departed. Eponine remained motionless; all at once, at the moment when Marius believed her forever asleep, she slowly opened her eyes, on which appeared the sombre profundity of death, and said to him with an accent whose gentleness seemed already to come from another world:

"And then, do you know, Monsieur Marius, I believe that I was a little bit in love with you."

She tried to smile once more, and expired.

VII.

GAVROCHE A PROFOUND CALCULATOR OF DISTANCES

Marius kept his promise. He deposited a kiss on this livid forehead, upon which beaded an icy sweat. It was not an infidelity to Cosette; it was a pensive and sweet farewell to an unhappy soul.

He had not taken without trembling the letter which Eponine had given him. He had immediately suspected an event in it. He was impatient to read it. The heart of man is so constituted, that the unfortunate child had scarcely closed her eyes ere Marius thought of unfolding this paper. He gently laid her on the ground and went off. Something told him that he could not read this letter in the presence of this corpse.

He walked up to a candle in the basement-room. It was a little note folded and sealed with the elegant care of women. The address was in a feminine handwriting, and ran:

"To Monsieur, Monsieur Marius Pontmercy, at M. Courfeyrac's, No. 16, Rue de la Verrerie."

He broke the seal and read:

"My well-beloved, alas! my father insists on our going away at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7, Rue de l'Homme-Armé. In eight days we shall be in England. Cosette. 4 June."

Such was the innocence of this love, that Marius did not even know the handwriting of Cosette.

What had happened may be told in a few words. Eponine had done it all. After the night of June 3 she had had a double thought, to foil the projects of her father and of the bandits upon the house in the Rue Plumet, and to separate Marius from Cosette. She had changed rags with the first young scamp she met, who had thought it amusing to dress as a woman, while Eponine disguised herself as a man. It was she who in the Champ de Mars had given to Jean Valjean the expressive warning: *Remove.* Jean Valjean had returned straight home and said to Cosette: *We shall start this evening and go to the Rue de l'Homme-Armé with Toussaint. Next week we shall be in London.* Cosette, astounded by this unexpected blow, had written in haste two lines to Marius. But how was she to put the letter in the post? She never went out alone, and Toussaint, surprised by such an errand, would certainly show the letter to M. Fauchelevent. In this anxiety,

Cosette had noticed through the grating Eponine in a man's dress, who now without cessation prowled around the garden. Cosette had called "this young workman," and had given him five francs and the letter, saying to him: "Carry this letter immediately to its address." Eponine put the letter in her pocket. The next day, June 5, she had gone to Courfeyrac's to ask for Marius, not to hand him the letter, but, a thing which every jealous and loving soul will comprehend, "to see." There she waited for Marius, or at least for Courfeyrac,—always to see. When Courfeyrac said to her: "we are going to the barricades," an idea crossed her mind. To throw herself into this death as she would have thrown herself into any other, and to push Marius into it. She had followed Courfeyrac, assured herself of the spot where the barricade was being constructed; and quite sure, since Marius had not received any notice and because she had intercepted the letter, that he would be at nightfall at the rendezvous of every evening, she went to the Rue Plumet, waited for Marius there, and gave him, in the name of his friends, that summons, which must, thought she, lead him to the barricade. She counted on the despair of Marius when he did not find Cosette; she was not mistaken. She herself returned to the Rue de la Chanvrerie. We have seen what

she did there. She died with that tragic joy of jealous hearts, which drags the beloved being down to his death and which says: "nobody shall have him!"

Marius covered with kisses the letter of Cosette. She loved him then! He had for a moment the idea that he need not, now, die. Then he said to himself: "She is going away. Her father is taking her to England, and my grandfather refuses to consent to the marriage. Nothing is changed in this fatality." Dreamers like Marius have these supreme despondencies, and desperate resolves issue from them. The fatigue of living is insupportable; death is the sooner over.

Then he thought that there remained two duties to accomplish: to inform Cosette of his death, and send her his last farewell, and to save from the imminent catastrophe, which was preparing, that poor boy, the brother of Eponine and the son of Thénardier.

He had with him a pocket-book; the same which had contained the pages on which he had written so many love-thoughts for Cosette. He tore out a leaf, and wrote in pencil these few lines:

"Our marriage was impossible. I asked my grandfather, he has refused; I am without fortune, and you also. I ran to your house, I did not find you there, you know the promise

I gave you, I keep it. I die. I love you When you read this, my soul will be near you, and will smile upon you."

Having nothing with which to seal this letter, he merely folded the paper in four and wrote on it this address:

To Mademoiselle Cosette Fauchelevent, at M. Fauchelevent's, No. 7, Rue de l'Homme-Armé.

The letter folded, he stood for a moment pensively, took out his pocket-book again, opened it and wrote with the same pencil on the first page these four lines:

"My name is Marius Pontmercy. Carry my body to the house of my grandfather, M. Gillenormand, No. 6, Rue des Filles-du-Calvaire, in the Marais."

He returned the pocket-book into the pocket of his coat, then called Gavroche. The lad, at the voice of Marius, ran up with his joyous and devoted look.

"Will you do something for me?"

"Everything," said Gavroche. "God of the good God! without you, in truth, I should have been cooked."

"You see this letter?"

"Yes."

"Take it. Leave the barricade at once," (Gavroche, disturbed, began to scratch his ear), "and to-morrow morning you will

deliver it at its address, to Mademoiselle Cosette, at M. Fauchelevent's, No. 7, Rue de l'Homme-Armé."

The heroic child replied:

"Ah! well, but! during that time the barricade will be taken, and I shall not be here."

"The barricade will not be attacked again before daybreak, according to all appearances, and it will not be taken before to-morrow midday."

The new respite which the assailants granted to the barricade was in fact prolonged. It was one of those intermittences frequent in nocturnal combats, which are always followed by a redoubled rabidness.

"Well," said Gavroche, "suppose I go and deliver your letter to-morrow morning?"

"It will be too late. The barricade will probably be blockaded, all the streets will be guarded, and you will not be able to get out. Be off at once."

Gavroche could not find anything to reply, he stood there, undecided, and scratching his head sorrowfully. All at once, with one of his bird-like movements, he seized the letter.

"All right," said he.

And he started off running by the Mondétour lane.

Gavroche had had an idea which decided him, but which he did not mention for fear that Marius should make some objection.

That idea was this:

"It is scarcely midnight, the Rue de l'Homme-Armé is not far, I will carry the letter immediately and I can be back in time."

BOOK FIFTEEN

THE RUE DE L'HOMME-ARMÉ

1.

BLOTTING-CASE, BLABBER

What are the convulsions of a city compared with the émeutes of a soul? Man is a greater profundity still than a people. Jean Valjean at this very moment was a prey to a frightful upheaval. All the gulfs were reopened within him. He too was shivering like Paris, on the threshold of a formidable and obscure revolution. A few hours had sufficed. His destiny and his conscience were brusquely covered with shadows. Of him also, as of Paris, it might be said: "the two principles are face to face." The white angel and the black angel are about to wrestle with each other on the bridge of the abyss. Which of the two will hurl the other down? Which shall sweep him away?

On the evening of that same day, June 5, Jean Valjean, accompanied by Cosette and by Toussaint, had installed himself in the Rue de l'Homme-Armé. A catastrophe awaited him there.

Cosette had not quitted the Rue Plumet without an essay at resistance. For the first time since they had lived together, the will of Cosette and the will of Jean Valjean had shown themselves distinct, and had been, if not conflicting, at least contradictory. There had been objection on one side and inflexibility on the other. The abrupt advice: *Remove*, thrown by a stranger to Jean Valjean, had alarmed him to the point of making him absolute. He fancied himself tracked and pursued. Cosette had to yield.

Both had arrived at the Rue de l'Homme-Armé without opening their mouths, and without speaking a word, each absorbed in their personal preoccupation; Jean Valjean was so anxious that he did not notice the sadness of Cosette, Cosette was so sad that she did not notice the inquietude of Jean Valjean.

Jean Valjean had brought Toussaint, which he had never done in his previous absences. He foresaw that he might never return perhaps to the Rue Plumet, and that he could neither leave Toussaint behind him nor tell her his secret. Moreover, he felt her to be devoted and safe. The treachery of a domestic to a master begins with curiosity. Now, Toussaint, as if she had been predestined to be the servant of Jean Valjean, was not curious.

She was wont to say, through her stammering, in her patois of a Barneville peasant: "I am from same to same; I think my deed; the remainder is not my labor. (I am so; I do my work; the rest is not my affair.)"

In his departure from the Rue Plumet, which had been almost a flight, Jean Valjean took away with him nothing but the little embalmed valise, christened by Cosette the *inseparable*. Full trunks would have required porters, and porters are witnesses. They had had a coach come to the door in the Rue de Babylone and they had gone away in it.

It was with great difficulty that Toussaint had obtained permission to pack up a little linen and clothing and a few toilet articles. Cosette, herself, only took her writing-desk and her blotting-case.

Jean Valjean, to heighten the solitude and mystery of this disappearance, had arranged it in such fashion as not to quit the pavilion in the Rue Plumet till nightfall, which had given Cosette time to write her note to Marius. They had arrived at the Rue de l'Homme-Armé after nightfall.

They went to bed silently.

The lodging in the Rue de l'Homme-Armé was situated in a rear-court, on the second story, and was composed of two bed-rooms, a dining-room, and a kitchen adjoining the

dining-room, with a loft where there was a folding-bed, that fell to the lot of Toussaint. The dining-room was at the same time an ante-room and separated the two bed-rooms. The apartments were provided with the necessary articles of furniture.

We are reassured almost as foolishly as we are alarmed; human nature is so constituted. Scarcely had Jean Valjean reached the Rue de l'Homme-Armé when his anxiety cleared away and, by degrees, was dissipated. There are calming spots which act in some sort mechanically on the mind. Obscure street, peaceful inhabitants. Jean Valjean felt an indescribable contagion of tranquility in this lane of ancient Paris, so narrow that it is barred against vehicles by a transverse beam, placed upon two posts, which is dumb and deaf in the midst of the noisy town, twilight in broad day, and, so to speak, incapable of emotions between its two heights of century-old houses, which are silent like the patriarchs they are. There is in this street a stagnant oblivion. Jean Valjean breathed there. How was it possible that he could be found there?

His first care was to place the *inseparable* by his side.

He slept soundly. Night gives counsels, we might add: night appeases. The next

morning he woke up almost gay. He found the dining-room charming, although it was hideous, furnished with an old round table, a low sideboard, surmounted by a hanging mirror, a rickety arm-chair, and a few chairs encumbered with Toussaint's parcels. In one of these parcels could be perceived through an opening the National Guard uniform of Jean Valjean.

As for Cosette, she made Toussaint bring her a basin of soup to her bed-room, and did not make her appearance till evening.

Toward five o'clock, Toussaint, who was coming and going very busy about this small removal, placed on the table of the dining-room a cold fowl, that Cosette, out of deference to her father, consented to look at.

This done, Cosette, on pretext of a persistent headache, said good-night to Jean Valjean, and shut herself up in her bed-room. Jean Valjean ate a wing of the fowl with appetite, and with his elbows on the table, growing reassured little by little, regained a feeling of his security.

While he was making this frugal dinner, he vaguely noticed, on two or three occasions, the stammering of Toussaint, who said to him: "Monsieur, there is a row, they are fighting in Paris." But, absorbed in a multitude of internal combinations, he had not

paid any attention. Truth to tell, he had not heard her.

He arose and began walking from the window to the door, and from the door to the window, more and more appeased.

With this calm, Cosette, his sole preoccupation, came back into his mind. Not that he was alarmed by this headache, a slight attack of the nerves, a young girl's pouting, a momentary cloud, which would disappear in a day or two; but he thought of the future, and, as usual, thought of it with gentleness. After all, he saw no obstacle to his happy life resuming its course. At certain hours everything seems impossible; at other hours everything appears easy; Jean Valjean was in one of those good hours. They ordinarily come after the bad, as day after night, by that law of succession and of contrast which is the very basis of nature, and which superficial minds call antithesis. In this peaceful street where he had sought refuge, Jean Valjean disengaged himself from all that had troubled him for some time. From the very fact that he had seen much darkness he was beginning to perceive a little azure. To have quitted the Rue Plumet without complication and without incident was a good step gained. Perhaps it would be wise to leave the country, were it only for a few months,

and to go to London. Well, they would go. To be in France, to be in England, what did that matter, provided he had Cosette near him? Cosette was his nation. Cosette sufficed for his happiness; the idea that he himself perhaps did not suffice for the happiness of Cosette, that idea which had formerly been his fever and his insomnia, did not even present itself to his mind. He was in a collapse of all his past griefs and in a full optimism. Cosette, being near to him, she seemed to be his; an optical effect which everybody has proved. He arranged with himself, and with every sort of facility, the departure for England with Cosette, and he saw his felicity reconstructed, no matter where, in the perspectives of his reverie.

While yet walking up and down, with slow steps, his eye all of a sudden encountered something strange.

He noticed, facing him in the inclined mirror which surmounted the sideboard, and read distinctly these four lines which follow:

"My well-beloved, alas! my father insists on our going away at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7, Rue de l'Homme-Armé. In eight days we shall be in England. Cosette. 4 June."

Jean Valjean stopped, haggard.

Cosette, on arriving, had placed her

blotting-case on the sideboard facing the mirror, and, immersed in her dolorous anguish, had forgotten it there, without even remarking that she had left it open, and open precisely at the page on which she had dried the four lines written by her and which she had intrusted to the young workman passing by the Rue Plumet. The writing was imprinted on the blotting-paper.

The mirror reflected the writing.

There resulted what is called in geometry a symmetrical image; so that the writing reversed on the blotting-paper was shown corrected in the mirror, and presented its original form; and Jean Valjean had before his eyes the letter written the previous evening by Cosette to Marius.

It was simple and crushing.

Jean Valjean walked up to the mirror. He re-read those four lines, but he did not believe them. They produced on him the effect of appearing in a flash of lightning. It was an hallucination. It was impossible. It was not.

Little by little his perception became more precise; he looked at the blotting-case of Cosette, and the feeling of the real fact returned to him. He took up the blotting-case and said: "It comes from that." He feverishly examined the four lines imprinted on the blotting-paper, the reversal of the letters made a

grotesque scrawl, and he saw no sense in them. Then he said to himself: "But that means nothing, there is nothing written there." And he drew a long breath with an inexpressible relief. Who has not felt these foolish joys in horrible moments? The soul does not surrender to despair until it has exhausted all illusions.

He held the blotter in his hand and gazed at it, stupidly happy, almost ready to laugh at the hallucination of which he had been the dupe. All at once his eyes fell again on the mirror, and he saw the vision again. The four lines were sketched upon it with an inexorable clearness. This time it was no mirage. The repetition of a vision is a reality, it was palpable, it was the writing restored by the mirror. He comprehended it.

Jean Valjean tottered, let the blotting-case fall, and fell into the old arm-chair by the side of the sideboard, his head drooping, his eye glassy, bewildered. He said to himself that it was evident and that the light of the world was forever eclipsed, and that Cosette had written that to somebody. Then he heard his soul, again become terrible, utter in the darkness a hoarse roar. Go, then, take from the lion the dog he has in his cage!

A thing strange and sad, at that moment, Marius had not yet received Cosette's letter;

accident had treacherously carried it to Jean Valjean before delivering it to Marius.

Jean Valjean up to this day had never been vanquished when put to the proof. He had been subjected to frightful assaults; not a blow of evil fortune had been spared him; the ferocity of fate, armed with every vindictiveness and every contempt of society, had taken him for its victim and ferociously attacked him. He had neither recoiled nor flinched before anything. He had accepted, when he had no escape, every extremity; he had sacrificed his reacquired inviolability as man, given up his liberty, risked his head, lost everything, suffered everything, and he had remained disinterested and stoical, to the point, that at times he had seemed to be as oblivious of himself as a martyr. His conscience, hardened to all possible assaults of adversity, might seem forever impregnable. Well, any one who had now gazed into his innermost self would have been forced to admit that in this hour it was growing weak.

Of all the tortures he had undergone in this long trial to which destiny had subjected him, this was the most formidable. Never had he been seized before with such pincers. He felt the mysterious quiver of every latent sensibility. He perceived the laceration of every unknown fibre. Alas, the supreme trial—we

had better say, the unique trial—is the loss of the beloved being.

Poor old Jean Valjean did not love Cosette, it is true, otherwise than as a father; but, as we have already remarked, into this paternity the very widowhood of his life had introduced every love; he loved Cosette as his daughter, and he loved her as his mother, and he loved her as his sister; and, as he had never had either sweetheart or wife, as nature is a creditor who accepts no protest, that sentiment also the most undestroyable of all was mingled with the others, vague, ignorant, pure with the purity of blindness, unconscious, heavenly, angelic, divine; less as a sentiment than an instinct, less as an instinct than an attraction, imperceptible and invisible, but real; and love, properly so called, was in his enormous tenderness for Cosette as is the vein of gold in the mountain, dark and virginal.

Let us recall that situation of heart which we have already indicated. No marriage was possible between them, not even that of souls; and yet it is certain that their destinies were wedded. Excepting Cosette, that is to say, excepting a childhood, Jean Valjean had not, during the whole of his long life, known anything about things that may be loved. Those passions and those loves which succeed

each other had not produced in him those successive greens, a light green over a dark green, which may be remarked on leaves that pass through the winter, and in men who pass their fiftieth year. In sum, and we have more than once insisted, all this internal fusion, all this whole, whose resultant was a lofty virtue, ended by making Jean Valjean a father to Cosette. A strange father, forged out of the grandsire, the son, the brother, and the husband, which there was in Jean Valjean; a father in whom there was even a mother; a father who loved Cosette and who adored her, and who had this child for his light, for his abode, for his family, for his country, for paradise.

Hence, when he saw that it was decidedly finished, that she was escaping him, that she was gliding through his hands, that she was stealing away, that she was a cloud, that she was water, when he had before his eyes this crushing evidence: another is the object of her heart, another is the wish of her life; she has a lover, I am only the father; I no longer exist; when he could no longer doubt, when he said to himself: "She is going out of me!" the sorrow he experienced passed beyond the possible. To have done all that he had done to come to this! and what then! to be nothing! Then, as we have

just stated, he had from head to foot a quivering of revolt. He felt even in the roots of his hair the immense reawaking of egoism and the "I" howled in the abyss of this man.

There are such things as internal earthquakes. The penetration of a desperate certainty into a man is not effected without cutting out and breaking off certain profound elements which are at times the man himself. Grief, when it attains to this pitch, is a complete rout of all the forces of conscience. These are fatal crises. Few among us come out from them equal to ourselves, and firm in our duty. When the limit of suffering is exceeded the most imperturbable virtue is disconcerted. Jean Valjean took up the blotting-case and convinced himself afresh; he remained bowed down and as if petrified, over those undeniable four lines, with eye fixed; and such a cloud collected within him that it might be believed that the whole interior of this soul was collapsing.

He examined this revelation, through the exaggerations of reverie, with an apparent and terrifying calmness, for it is a formidable thing when the calmness of a man attains to the coldness of a statue.

He measured the frightful step that his destiny had taken without any suspicion on his part; he recalled his fears of the past

summer, so foolishly dissipated; he recognized the precipice; it was still the same; only Jean Valjean was no longer at the top, he was at the bottom.

An unheard-of and poignant fact, he had fallen without perceiving it. The whole light of his life had fled while he still fancied he could see the sun.

His instinct did not hesitate. He brought together certain circumstances, certain dates, certain blushes, and certain palenesses of Cosette, and said to himself: "It is he." The divination of despair is a sort of mysterious bow which never misses its mark. With his first conjecture he hit Marius. He did not know the name but he immediately found the man. He perceived distinctly at the bottom of the implacable evocation of memory the unknown prowler of the Luxembourg, that wretched seeker of love-affairs, that romantic idler, that imbecile, that coward, for it is cowardice to make lover's eyes at girls who have by their side a father who loves them.

After he was quite satisfied that this young man was at the bottom of the situation, and that all this came from him, Jean Valjean, the regenerated man, the man who had travailed so heavily in his soul, the man who had made so many efforts to resolve all his life, all his misery and all his misfortune,

into love, he looked into himself and saw there a spectre, Hatred.

Great griefs contain exhaustion. They discourage existence. The man into whom they enter feels something retire from him. In youth their visit is lugubrious; later, it is sinister. Alas, when the blood is hot, when the hair is black, when the head is erect upon the body like the flame on the candle, when the sheaf of destiny is still full with depth, when the heart full of a desirable love still has palpitations which may meet with a return, when a man has time before him in which to recover, when all women are there, and all the smiles, and all the future, and the whole horizon, when the strength of life is complete, if despair be a frightful thing, what is it then in old age, when years are growing more and more livid, at that twilight hour when men begin to see the stars of the tomb!

While he was thinking, Toussaint entered. Jean Valjean raised himself up, and demanded of her:

"In what direction is it? do you know?"

Toussaint, stupefied, could only answer him:

"If you please?"

Jean Valjean continued:

"Did you not tell me just now that they were fighting?"

"Ah! yes, monsieur," replied Toussaint. "It is over by Saint-Merry."

There are some mechanical movements which come to us, without our knowledge even, from our deepest thoughts. It was without doubt under the impulse of a movement of this kind, of which he was scarcely conscious, that Jean Valjean found himself five minutes afterward in the street.

He was bareheaded, seated on the door-post before his house. He seemed to be listening.

Night had set in.

II.

THE GAMIN AN ENEMY OF LIGHTS

How much time did he pass thus? What were the ebb and flow of this tragical meditation? did he draw himself up? did he remain bowed down? had he been bent till he was broken? could he straighten himself again and regain a footing in his conscience upon something solid? He himself, probably, could not have said.

The street was deserted. A few anxious bourgeois who were rapidly returning home scarcely noticed him. Each for himself in times of peril. The lamplighter came as usual to light the lamp which was exactly opposite the door of No. 7 and went away. Jean Valjean, to one who had examined him in this shadow, would not have appeared a living man. He was there, seated on his door-post motionless, as a goblin of ice. There is a congelation in despair. The tocsin and vague stormy rumors could be heard. In the midst of all these convulsions of the bell blended

with the émeute, the clock of Saint-Paul struck eleven o'clock, solemnly and without haste; for the tocsin is man; the hour is God. The passing of the hour produced no effect on Jean Valjean; Jean Valjean did not stir. However, almost at that very moment, a sudden detonation broke out in the direction of the Markets, a second followed, even more violent; it was probably that attack on the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie which we have just seen repulsed by Marius. At this double discharge, whose fury seemed increased by the stupor of the night, Jean Valjean was startled; he turned in the direction whence the noise came; then he fell back on his door-post, crossed his arms, and his head slowly dropped again upon his breast.

He resumed his dark dialogue with himself.

All at once he raised his eyes, somebody was walking in the street, he heard footsteps near him, and by the light of the lamp in the direction of the street which runs past the Archives, he perceived a livid face, young and radiant.

Gavroche had arrived in the Rue de l'Homme-Armé.

Gavroche was looking up in the air, and appeared to be searching. He saw Jean Valjean perfectly, but he paid no attention to him.

Gavroche, after having looked in the air, looked down on the ground; he stood on tip-

toe, and felt the doors and windows of the ground-floors; they were all shut, barred, and chained. After having examined five or six fronts of houses barricaded in this way, the gamin shrugged his shoulders, and then discussed the matter with himself, in these terms:

"Pardi!"

Then he looked up in the air again.

Jean Valjean, who a moment before in the state of mind in which he was would neither have spoken to nor answered any one, felt himself irresistibly impelled to address a word to this child.

"Little one," said he, "what is the matter with you?"

"I'm hungry," answered Gavroche bluntly. And he added: "Little yourself."

Jean Valjean felt in his pocket and took out a five-franc piece.

But Gavroche, who was a species of wagtail, and who passed rapidly from one gesture to another, had picked up a stone. He had noticed the lamp.

"Hilloh," said he, "you have still got lamps here. You are not in order, my friends. That is disorderly. Smash it."

And he threw the stone at the lamp, whose glass fell with such a noise that some bourgeois concealed behind their curtains in the opposite house cried: "There is Ninety-three!"

The lamp oscillated violently and went out. The street became suddenly dark.

"That's it, old street," said Gavroche, "put on your night-cap."

And then turning toward Jean Valjean:

"What do you call that gigantic monument which you have there at the end of the street? It's the Archives, isn't it? They ought to chip off some of those great fools of columns and make a tidy barricade."

Jean Valjean walked up to Gavroche.

"Poor creature," said he in a low voice, and speaking to himself, "he is hungry."

And he put the one hundred sous piece into his hand.

Gavroche cocked up his nose, amazed at the size of this big sou; he looked at it in the obscurity, and the whiteness of the big sou dazzled him. He knew five-franc pieces by hearsay; their reputation was agreeable to him; he was charmed to see one so near. He said: "Let us contemplate the tiger."

He looked at it some moments with ecstasy; then, turning toward Jean Valjean, he handed him the piece and said to him majestically:

"Bourgeois, I prefer to break lamps. Take back your wild beast. You can't corrupt me. It has five claws; but it can't scratch me."

"Have you a mother?" demanded Jean Valjean.

Gavroche replied:

"Perhaps more than you."

"Well," continued Jean Valjean, "keep the money for your mother."

Gavroche felt softened. Moreover, he had noticed that the man who was speaking to him had no hat, and that inspired him with confidence.

"Really," said he, "it is not to prevent me breaking lamps?"

"Break all you like."

"You are a worthy man," said Gavroche.

And he put the five-franc piece in one of his pockets.

His confidence increasing he added:

"Do you belong to this street?"

"Yes, why?"

"Can you point me out No. 7?"

"What do you want at No. 7?"

Here the lad stopped, for he feared he had said too much, he energetically plunged his nails into his hair, and confined himself to answering:

"Ah! there it is."

An idea flashed across the mind of Jean Valjean. Agony has lucidities of that nature. He said to the lad:

"Have you brought me the letter that I am waiting for?"

"You?" said Gavroche. "You are not a woman."

"The letter is for Mademoiselle Cosette, is it not?"

"Cosette?" growled Gavroche. "Yes, I believe it is that comical name."

"Well," continued Jean Valjean, "it is to me you are to deliver the letter. Give it me."

"In that case, you must know that I am sent from the barricade?"

"Without doubt," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche thrust his hand into another of his pockets, and took out a paper folded in four.

Then he gave a military salute.

"Respect for the despatch," said he. "It comes from the provisional government."

"Give it me," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche held the paper raised above his head.

"Don't imagine that it is a love-letter. It is for a woman, but it is for the people. We are fighting, and we respect the sex. We are not like some people in high life, where there are lions that send love-letters to camels."

"Give it me."

"After all," continued Gavroche, "you have the air of a worthy man."

"Give it me, quick."

"Take it."

And he handed the paper to Jean Valjean.

"And you hurry too, Monsieur *Chose*,"

(what's your name) "since Mamselle *Chosette*" (what's her name-ess) "is waiting."

Gavroche felt satisfied at having made this pun.

Jean Valjean added:

"Is it to Saint-Merry that the answer must be sent?"

"You would make in that way," exclaimed Gavroche, "one of those cakes vulgarly called *brioches*" (blunders). "This letter comes from the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and I am going back there. Good-night, citizen."

This said, Gavroche went away, or, to speak more correctly, returned toward the place whence he had come with the flight of an escaped bird. He replunged into the obscurity, as if he had made a hole there, with the rigid rapidity of a projectile; the lane of l'Homme-Armé became again silent and solitary; in the twinkling of an eye, this strange lad, who had something of shadow and dream within him, was buried in the gloom of those rows of black houses, and was lost in it like smoke in darkness; and it might have been believed that he was dispersed and had vanished, if, a few minutes after his disappearance, a noisy breakage of glass, and the splendid bang-bang of a lamp falling on the pavement, had not suddenly reawakened the indignant bourgeois. It was Gavroche who was passing along the Rue de Chaume.

III.

WHILE COSETTE AND TOUSSAINT SLEEP

Jean Valjean re-entered with the letter of Marius.

He groped his way up stairs, pleased with the darkness like an owl that holds its prey, gently opened and shut again his door, listened whether he could hear any sound, convinced himself that, according to all appearances, Cosette and Toussaint were asleep, plunged into the Fumade lighting bottle three or four matches before he could procure a spark, his hand trembled so much; there was robbery in what he was going to do. At last his candle was lighted, he leaned his elbows on the table, opened the paper, and read.

In violent emotions we do not read, we race over, so to speak, the paper we hold, we clutch it like a victim, we crumple it, we bury in it the nails of our fury or of our delight; we run to the end, we leap to the beginning; the attention is feverish; it comprehends, by wholesale, almost every essential fact; it seizes

one point, and all the rest disappears. In the note from Marius to Cosette Jean Valjean saw nothing except these words:

"... I die. When you read this my soul will be near you."

In the presence of these two lines he felt a horrible bedazzlement; he remained for a moment as if crushed by the change of emotion which took place in him, he gazed at the letter of Marius with a species of drunken amazement; he had before his eyes this splendor, the death of the hated being.

He uttered a frightful cry of internal joy. So all was over. The dénouement had arrived more quickly than he could have dared to hope. The being who encumbered his destiny was disappearing. He had gone away of his own accord, freely, of his own good will. Without his, Jean Valjean's, doing anything in the matter, without any fault of his, "that man" was going to die. Perhaps even he was already dead. Here his fever made its calculations. "No. He is not dead yet. The letter was evidently written to be read by Cosette the next morning; since the two discharges which were heard between eleven o'clock and midnight, nothing had occurred; the barricade would not be seriously attacked till daybreak; but no matter, from the moment when 'that man' is mixed up

in this war, he is lost; he is caught in the cogwheels." Jean Valjean felt himself delivered. He was going to find himself once more alone with Cosette. The rivalry ceased; the future recommenced. He had only to keep the note in his pocket. Cosette would never know what had become of "that man." "I have only to let things take their course. That man cannot escape. If he is not dead yet, it is certain that he is going to die. What happiness!"

All this said within himself, he became gloomy.

Then he went down and awaked the porter.

About an hour after, Jean Valjean went out in the full dress of a National Guard and armed. The porter had easily obtained for him in the neighborhood the articles to complete his equipment. He had a loaded musket and a full cartouche-box. He proceeded in the direction of the Markets.

IV

EXCESS OF ZEAL IN GAVROCHE

Meanwhile an adventure had happened to Gavroche.

Gavroche after having conscientiously stoned the lamp in the Rue du Chaume, approached the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, and not seeing "a cat" there, found the opportunity good for striking up all the song of which he was capable. His march, far from being checked by the singing, became accelerated. He began to sow along the sleeping or terrified houses these incendiary couplets:

"L'oiseau mèdit dans lesch armilles,
Et prètend qu' hier Atala
Avec un russe s'en alla.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

"Mon ami pierrot, tu babilles,
Parce que l'autre jour Mila
Cogna sa vitre, et m'appela.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

"Les drôlesses sont fort gentilles ;
Leur poison qui m'ensorcela
Griserait monsieur Orfila.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

"J'aime l'amour et ses bisbilles,
J'aime Agnes, j'aime Pamèla,
Lise en m'allumant se brûla.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

"Jadis, quand je vis les mantilles
De Suzette et de Zéïla,
Mon âme à leurs plis se mêla.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

"Amour, quand, dans l'ombre où tu brilles,
Tu coiffes de roses Lola,
Je me damnerais pour cela.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

"Jeanne, à ton miroir tu t'habilles !
Mon cœur un beau jour s'envola;
Je crois que c'est Jeanne qui l'a.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

"Le soir, en sortant des quadrilles,
Je montre aux étoiles Stella
Et je leur dis : regardez-la.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la."

(In the boughs of the yoke-elms slander is heard;
Fair Atala yesterday fled, said a bird,
With a Russian swain that her heart preferred.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

And you, my dear Peter, chatter I know,
And all because Mila a few days ago
On her window-pane knocked and called to me so.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

The hussies I find very pretty to be;
And their poisonous cup that bewitches me
Intoxicates Monsieur Orfila, I see.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

I love Love and its jangles, their woes despite,
I love Agnes so sweet, Paméla so bright:
Warm waxes Eliza in giving me light.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

When I saw the charming mantles of old
Of Susy and Zeila, if truth be told,
My soul twined itself with each mantle-fold.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

O Love, when thou shinest in shade and there
Thou puttest the roses in Lola's hair,
I could curse myself for that, I declare.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

Joan, to your glass where you dress each day!
My heart one fine morning flew away;
I believe that with Joan my heart doth stay.

Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

Going out from quadrille rooms, one starlight night,
Fair Stella I showed to the orbs of light.
"Look at her," I said to the stars so bright.

Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.)

Gavroche, while yet singing, was lavish of pantomime. Gesture is the prop of a chorus. His face, an inexhaustible repertory of masks, made grimaces more convulsive and more fantastic than the mouths of a torn sheet in a heavy wind. Unluckily, as he was alone and in the night, this was neither seen nor visible. Much wealth is lost in this way.

Suddenly he stopped short.

"Let us interrupt the romance," said he.

His cat-like eye had just distinguished in the recess of a porte-cochère what is called in painting an ensemble; that is to say, a being and a thing; the thing was a hand-cart, the being was an Auvergnat who was sleeping in it.

The shafts of the cart were resting upon the pavement, and the head of the Auvergnat was resting on the bottom of the cart. His body lay along this inclined plane, and his feet touched the earth.

Gavroche, with his experience of the things of this world, recognized a drunken man.

It was some street-corner porter who had drunk too much and who was sleeping too much.

"Here," thought Gavroche, "is what summer nights serve for. The Auvergnat sleeps in his cart. We take the cart for the republic, and we leave the Auvergnat for the monarchy."

His mind had just been illuminated by the following flash:

"That cart would go jolly well on our barricade."

The Auvergnat was snoring.

Gavroche pulled the cart gently by the back end and the Auvergnat by the front, that is to say, by the feet, and at the end of a minute the Auvergnat was lying, imperturbable, flat on the pavement.

The cart was liberated.

Gavroche, accustomed constantly to face unexpected events, had always everything about him. He felt in one of his pockets and took out a scrap of paper and an end of a red pencil, stolen from some carpenter.

He wrote:

"*Republique Française*
Received this cart."

And he signed: "GAVROCHE."

This done, he put the paper into the pocket

of the velvet waistcoat of the Auvergnat, still snoring, seized the shafts with both hands, and set off in the direction of the Markets, pushing the cart before him at a grand gallop with a glorious triumphal uproar.

This was perilous. There was a post at the royal printing-office. Gavroche did not think of that. This post was occupied by National Guards of the suburbs. A certain alarm had begun to arouse the squad, and heads were raised from the guard beds. Two lamps broken, one after another, this song sung at the top of the voice, were a good deal for these cowardly streets, which like to go to bed at sunset and which put the extinguisher upon their candle at an early hour. For an hour past the gamin had been making in this peaceful district the uproar of a fly in a bottle. The suburban sergeant listened. He waited. He was a prudent man.

The furious rolling of the cart filled the measure of possible delay, and determined the sergeant to attempt a reconnoissance.

"There is a whole band here!" said he, "let us go softly."

It was clear that the hydra of anarchy had emerged from its box, and was running mad in the quartier.

And the sergeant ventured out of the post with stealthy steps.

All at once, Gavroche, pushing his cart, at the moment when he was turning out of the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, found himself face to face with a uniform, a shako, a plume, and a musket.

For the second he stopped short.

"Hold on," said he, "it's he. Good-day, public order."

Gavroche's astonishments were short and quickly thawed.

"Where are you going, you young blackguard?" cried the sergeant.

"Citizen," said Gavroche, "I have not yet called you bourgeois. Why do you insult me?"

"Where are you going, scoundrel?"

"Monsieur," continued Gavroche, "you may perhaps have been a man of wit yesterday, but you were discharged this morning."

"I ask you where you are going, villain?"

Gavroche answered:

"You speak genteelly. Really, no one would guess your age. You ought to sell all your hairs at a hundred francs a piece. That would bring you in five hundred francs."

"Where are you going? where are you going? where are you going, bandit?"

Gavroche retorted:

"Those are nasty words. The first time they give you the breast, they ought to wipe your mouth better."

The sergeant leveled his bayonet.

"Will you tell me where you are going, at last, wretch?"

"My general," said Gavroche, "I am going to fetch the doctor for my wife, who is taken in labor."

"To arms!" cried the sergeant.

To save themselves by what has ruined them is the masterpiece of brave men; Gavroche measured at a glance of the eye the whole situation. It was the cart that had compromised him, it was for the cart to protect him.

At the moment when the sergeant was going to rush upon Gavroche, the cart, converted into a projectile and launched with all his might, rolled upon him with fury, and the sergeant, struck full in the stomach, fell backward into the gutter, while his musket was discharged in the air.

At the cry of the sergeant, the men of the post hurried forth pell-mell; the shot produced a general discharge haphazard, after which they reloaded their guns, and began again.

This blindman's-buff musketry lasted a good quarter of an hour, and killed sundry panes of glass.

Meanwhile, Gavroche, who had run back desperately, stopped five or six streets off,

and sat down panting on the post at the corner of the Enfants-Rouges.

He listened.

After having breathed for a few minutes, he turned in the direction where the firing was raging, he raised his left hand to the level of his nose, and threw it three times in advance of himself, at the same time striking the back of his head with his right hand ; a sovereign gesture, in which the Parisian gamins have condensed French irony, and which is evidently efficacious, as it has already lasted more than half a century.

This gaiety was ruffled by one bitter reflection.

"Yes," said he, "I grin, I wring myself. I overflow with joy, but I am losing my way, I shall have to make a detour. I only hope I shall reach the barricade in time!"

Thereupon he resumed his course.

And while running:

"Ah, well, where was I?" said he.

He began to sing his song again, as he plunged rapidly through the streets, and these verses died away in the darkness:

Mais il reste encore des bastilles,
Et je vais mettre le holà
Dans l'ordre public que voilà.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Quelqu'un veut-il jouer aux quilles ?
Tout l'ancien monde s'écroula
Quand la grosse boule roula,
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Vieux bon peuple, à coups de béquilles,
Cassons ce Louvre où s'étala
La monarchie en falbala.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Nous en avons forcé les grilles ;
Le roi Charles Dix ce jour-là
Tenait mal, et se décolla.
Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

(But some fortresses stand as they stood of old,
And I go to stop with valor bold
The public order you there behold.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

Will any one now at skittles play ?
The old world all fell to pieces, they say,
When the great ball rolled along one day.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

Good old people ! with blows of crutches strong,
Let us shiver the Louvre, where shone so long
In furbelows, monarchs, renowned in song.
Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.

We had forced its railings, and well we know
Charles the Tenth that day made a very poor show,
And his hold of the Palace quite let go.

Whither go the fair lasses,
Lon la.)

The taking up of arms at the post was not without results. The cart was conquered and the drunken man was made prisoner. The one was placed in the Green Yard ; the other was later brought before a court-martial as an accomplice. The public minister of that day gave proof by this circumstance of his indefatigable zeal for the defence of society.

The adventure of Gavroche, preserved as a tradition in the quartier of the Temple, is one of the most terrible reminiscences of the old bourgeois of the Marais, and is entitled in their memory: "Nocturnal attack on the post of the royal printing-office."

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